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THE PHILOLOGY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH TONGUE

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BY

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

PHILOLOGY may be described as a science of language based upon the comparison of languages. It is the aim of Philology to order the study of language upon principles indicated by language itself, so that each part and function shall have its true and natural place assigned to it, according to the order, relation, and proportion dictated by the nature of language. What the nature of language is, can be ascertained only by a wide comparison of languages taken at various stages of development. Such a work is to be performed, not by any one man, but by the co-operation of many: and many have now been co-operating for three quarters of a century past, and sending in from every land their contributions towards it.

In this newly gotten knowledge of human language there is matter for educational use. The relations of language to culture are so intimate that what betters our knowledge of the one should improve the process of the other. It is an open question, in what way the lessons of language may best be converted to the purpose of education, but there is one fault which might at least be somewhat mended:—our knowledge of language has been too broken and divided. we have most of us known one language best vernacularly, and another best grammatically. Something would be gained if our cultivation of language could be rather more centred upon the mother tongue, so that our vernacular and our

philological acquirements might more effectually support one another. The lessons of philology would be taught more thoroughly, as well as more conveniently, if the materials for the instruction were supplied by the mother tongue. The effect of philological study is to quicken the perception of analogy between languages; and this advantage would be more immediate in its returns if our philology were more based on the mother tongue. Nothing would put the learner so readily or so implicitly in possession of all the essence of philological gains; nothing would be of such good practical avail whenever the knowledge of one language was needed to bear upon the acquisition of another. Were the English language studied philologically, the faculty of acquiring other languages would be more generally an English faculty.

There are two chief ways of entering upon a scientific study. One is by the way of Principles, and the other is by the way of Elements. If the learner approaches Philology by the way of principles, it is necessary that the principles should be familiarised to him by the aid of examples and illustrations drawn from various languages. Each of the methods excels in its own peculiar way; and the excellence of this method is, that the subject is presented with the greatest fullness and totality of effect—as a mountain is most imposing to the view on its most precipitous side. But it has this great drawback,—that the learner can ill judge of the examples; he must take them on authority; and so far forth as the instruction is based on facts which are not within the cognisance of the learner, the teaching is unscientific.

The other method is by the examination of a single language; and here the course of treatment follows the order of natural growth, introducing the principles in an occasional

and incidental manner, just as they happen to be called for in the course of the investigation. If the object-language be the learner's own vernacular, this course will be something like climbing a mountain by the side where the slope is easiest. When this path is chosen, the complete and compact view of principles as a whole will be deferred until such time as the learner shall have reached them severally by means of facts which lie within his own experience. It is upon this, which may be called the Elementary method, that the present manual has been constructed; the aim of which has been to find a path through most familiar ground up to philological principles.

It was assumed at starting that the English language would furnish examples of all that is most typical in human speech, and it has been the reward of the labourer in this instance that his anticipation of the fecundity of his material has been most abundantly and even unexpectedly verified.

The excellent verbal Index is the work of H. N. Harvey, Esq., of the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton; and while it is the most valuable addition that this handbook could have received, it is by me still more highly esteemed as a new token of an old friendship.

WHATLEY RECTORY,

*July, 1871.*

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN this Edition I have freely altered wherever I thought I could improve; but this has not occasioned a single change in matter of principle, or in the general plan of arrangement. Notwithstanding many variations of detail, this Edition is essentially one with the First.

The most considerable additions are in the Phonology of the First and Second Chapters, and in the Particle-Composition of the Eleventh.

The division into paragraphs has made it necessary to reconstruct the Index anew, and for this work I am again indebted to the same unwearied friend as before.

SWANSWICK,  
*April 21, 1873.*

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HISTORIC SKETCH  
OF THE RISE AND FORMATION  
OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

1. The Philology of a language includes all that is meant by its Grammar, and yet it is at the same time a distinct study. This difference hinges upon the point of view from which the language is contemplated. In grammar the view is confined to the particular language, while in philology the language is considered in regard to its external relations. In grammar we seek rules for the regulation of domestic usage : in philology we seek principles to explain the habits of speech. Further, the rules of grammar are justified by reference to the logical sense : the laws of philology have to be established by external comparison and induction. Thus grammar is a local and internal study of language : philology is outward and (in its tendency) universal.

This outward look of philology takes two principal directions. In the first place it will lead us to enquire into the earlier habits of the particular language, that we may be able to trace by what process of development it

reached its present condition. This is the historical aspect of philology. In the second place, it will lead us to bring all this historical knowledge to the comparison of our language with other languages, in order that we may be able to discover principles of development and structure, and base the framework of our particular language as far as possible upon lines which are common to many languages, with the further aim of seeking that which is universal and essential to all.

This will explain the plan of the present treatise. It begins with a short historic sketch of the origin of the English language, and then proceeds to the delineation of its parts in their mutual bearings and proportions. Everywhere the sense of relation and comparison underlies the treatment, and passing notices of other languages are interspersed here and there, to keep the reader from forgetfulness of this essential condition. For whereas there are various ways of viewing the difference between grammar and philology, there is none more full-front to the business than this—that while grammar attends to the proprieties of a language with an interest limited to the compass of its literature, philology considers it in the widest possible relations of comparison or contrast with other languages, its paramount aim being the elucidation of language as a branch of the science of humanity.

### § 1. *External Relations.*

2. The English is one of the languages of the great Indo-European (or Aryan) family, the members of which have been traced across the double continent of Asia and Europe through the Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Latin, Slavonic, Gothic, and Keltic languages. In order to illustrate the right of our

English language to a place in this series, it will suffice to exhibit a few proofs of definite relationship between our language on the one hand, and the classical languages of Greece and Italy on the other. The readiest illustration of this is to be found in the Transition of Consonants. When the same words appear under altered forms in different members of the same family of languages, the diversity of form is found to have a regular method and analogy. Such an analogy has been established between the varying consonants which hold analogous positions in cognate languages, and their variation has been reduced to rule by the German philologist Jacob Grimm. He has founded the law of Consonantal Transition, or consonantal equivalents.

A few easy examples will put the reader in possession of the nature of this law. When a Welshman speaks English in Shakespeare he often substitutes *p* for *b*, as Fluellen in *Henry V*, v. 1: 'Pragging knave, Pistoll, which you and yourself and all the world know to be no petter than a fellow, looke you now, of no merits: hee is come to me, and prings me pread and sault yesterday, looke you, and bid me eate my leeke,' &c. The Welsh parson, Sir Hugh Evans, in *Merry Wives*, puts *t* for *d*: 'It were a goot motion'—'The tevil and his tam'—and 'worts' for words, as:

'EVANS. Pauca verba; (Sir *John*) good worts.

FALSTAFFE. Good worts? good cabidge.'

Likewise *f* for *v*: 'It is that ferry person for all the orld'; and 'fidelicet' for 'videlicet'—'I most fehemently desire you,' &c.

3. This familiar illustration has lost none of its force since the time of Shakspeare. A recent traveller in North Wales saw a railway truck at Conway on which some Welsh porter had chalked 'Chester goots.' This variation at which we

smile as a provincial peculiarity, offers the best clue to a universal law of phonetic transition. It is not confined to one country or to one family of languages.

The Semitic family, which is the great contrast to the Indo-European, follows the same path in the phonetic variations of its dialects.

Between the Hebrew and Chaldee there is a well-marked interchange of *z* and *d*; while a third dialect, the Phœnician, seems to have put a *t* for *z* (*ts*). The Hebrew pronoun for *this* is *zeh*; but in Chaldee it becomes *dāa* and *den* and *di*: the Hebrew word for *male* is *zakar*; but in Chaldee it appears as *dekar*: the Hebrew verb to *sacrifice* is *zavach*; but in Chaldee it is *devach*: the Hebrew verb for being timid is *zachal*; but in Chaldee it is *dechal*. If we compare Hebrew with the third dialect we get *t* for *z*. The Hebrew word for *rock* is *zoor* or *tsoor*, after which a famous Phœnician city seated on a rock was called *Zōr*, as it is always called in the Old Testament; but this word sounded in Greek ears from Phœnician mouths so as to cause them to write it *Túpos*, *Tyrus*, whence we have the name *Tyre*. It is to this sort of play upon the gamut or scale of consonants, a play which is kept up between kindred dialects, that Grimm, when he had reduced it to a law, gave the name of *Lautverschiebung*, or Consonantal Transition, reciprocity of consonants.

As, on the one hand, we find this reciprocity where we find cognate dialects; so, on the other, if we can establish the fact that there is or has been such a consonantal reciprocity between two languages, we have obtained the strongest proof of their relationship. There are traces of this kind between the English on the one hand and the Classical languages on the other.

4. We suppose the reader is familiar with the twofold

division of the mute consonants into lip, tooth, and throat consonants in the one direction, and into thin, middle, and aspirate consonants in the other direction. If not, he should learn this little table by heart, before he proceeds a step further. Learn it by rote, both ways, both horizontally and vertically.

|                 | LIP<br>(Labial). | TOOTH<br>(Dental). | THROAT<br>(Guttural). |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Thin</i>     | p                | t                  | c = k                 | <i>Tenues</i>    |
| <i>Medial</i>   | b                | d                  | g                     | <i>Medials</i>   |
| <i>Aspirate</i> | f                | p = ɸ = th         | h (Saxon).            | <i>Aspirates</i> |

By means of this classification of the mutes we are able to shew traces of a law of transition having existed between English and the Classical languages. We find instances of words, for example, which begin with a thin consonant in Greek or Latin or both, and the same word is found in English or its cognate dialects beginning with an aspirate. Thus, if the Latin or Greek word begins with *p* the English word begins with *f*. Examples: *πῦρ* and *fire*: *πρό*, *πρώτος*, *primus*, compared with the Saxon words *fruma*, *frem*; with the modern preposition *from*, which is of the same root and original sense with *for*, *fore*, *forth*: *πῶλος*, *pullus*, with *foal*, *filly*: *pellis* with *fell*: *πῖξ*, *pugnus*, with *fist*: *πατήρ*, *pater*, with *father*: *πέντε* with *five*, German *fünf*: *πούς*, *pes*, with *foot*: *pecus* with *feoh*: *pasco* with *feed*: *πῖσκις* with *fish*: *πλέκω* with *flax*.

5. If the Classical word begins with an aspirate, the English word begins with a medial: for example, the Greek *φ* or Latin *f* is found responsive to the English *B*. Thus, *φηγός*, *fagus*, and *beech*; *φύω*, *fui*, and *be*; *φρατρία*, *frater*, and *brother*; *φέρω*, *fero*, and *bear*. The Greek *θ* by the same

rule responds to the English *ɒ* ; as in *θήρ* and *deer* ; *θυγάτηρ* and *daughter* ; *θύρα* and *door*.

If the Greek or Latin has the medial, the English should have the thin : that is to say, a Classic  $\Delta$  or *ɒ* should correspond to our English *ɾ*. So it does in *δάκρυ*, and *tear* : *δύο*, *duo*, and *two* : *δέκα*, *decem*, and *ten* : *δέμω*, *domus*, and *timbran*, the Saxon verb for building : *δένδρον*, *δρῦς*, and *tree* : *δῖγνα*, archaic Latin for *lingua*, and *tongue*. These, and all such illustrations, may be summarised for convenience sake in the following mnemonic formula :—

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| T | A | M |
| 𐌹 | 𐌿 | 𐌺 |

where the Roman letters of the Latin word *TAM* placed over the Gothic letters of the German word *𐌹mt* are intended to bracket together the initial letters of *Thins*, *Medials*, and *Aspirates*, so as to represent the order of transition.

In the use of this scheme, we will suppose the student to be enquiring after the Greek and Latin analogues to the English word *kind*. This word begins with a Tenuis or thin consonant, and thus directs us to the letter *ɾ* in the Gothic word *Amt*. Over this *ɾ* we find in the Latin word an *m*, and by this we are taught that the Medial of *κ*, which is *g* (see Table, 4), will be the corresponding initial in Greek and Latin. Thus we are directed to *γεν* and *gigno* as the analogues of *kin* and *kind*. The same process will lead from *knee* to *γονυ* and *genu*, from *ken* and *know* to *γινώσκω*.

6. These examples will satisfy the reader that here we have traces of a regular law, and that our language is of one and the same strain with the Greek and Latin—that is to say, it is one of the Indo-European family.

A succession of small divergences which run upon stated

lines of variation—lines having a determinate relation to one another, and constituting an orbit in which the transitional movement revolves:—this is a phenomenon worthy of our contemplation. It is the simplest example of a fact which in other shapes will meet us again, namely, that the beauty of philology springs out of that variety over unity which makes all nature beautiful, and all study of nature profoundly attractive.

It will be easy to discover a great number of examples which lie outside the above analogy. One important cause of unconformability is the introduction of foreign words. This applies to all Gothic words beginning with *r*, which are foreigners and not subject to this law. There is also a certain amount of accidental disturbance. Casualties happen to words as to all mortal products: and in the course of time their forms get defaced. The German language offers many examples of this. If I want to understand the consonantal analogies which existed between English and German, I should prefer as a general rule to go to the oldest form of German, because a conventional orthography, among other causes, has in German led to a disfigurement of many of the forms. The tendency of words to get disguised, is therefore one reason why these analogies do not hold more completely than they do. In process of time new principles of word-forming are admitted, new words and new forms overgrow and supersede the old; even the old words conform more or less to the new fashions, and become changed in their appearance, so that the traces of old kindred are obliterated.

7: But if such a relation as that which is condensed in the above mnemonic is clearly established as existing between the Classical languages on the one hand, and the Gothic on the other, much more distinctly and largely may it be

shewn that a like relation exists internally between the two main subdivisions of the Gothic family. These two parts are the High Dutch and the Low Dutch. The Modern or New High Dutch is what we now call 'German,' the great literary language of Central Europe, inaugurated by Luther in his translation of the Bible. Behind this great modern speech we have two receding stages of its earlier forms, the Middle High Dutch or the language of the Epic of the Nibelungen, and the Old High Dutch or the language of the Scripture paraphrasts Otfrid and Notker. The *Alt-Hoch-Deutsch* goes back to the tenth century; the *Mittel-Hoch-Deutsch* goes back to the thirteenth; and the *Neu-Hoch-Deutsch* dates from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. This is the High Dutch division of the Gothic languages.

Round about these, in a broken curve, are found the representatives of the Low Dutch family. Their earliest literary traces go back to the fourth century, and appear in the villages of Dacia, in lands which slope to the Danube; where the country is by foreigners called Wallachia. It is from this region that we have the *Moeso-Gothic Gospels* and other relics of the planting of Christianity. But the greatest body of the Low Dutch is to the north and west of Germany. Along the shores of the Baltic, and far inland, where High Dutch is established in the educated ranks, the mass of the folk speak Low Dutch, which locally passes by the name of *Platt-Deutsch*. The kingdom of the Netherlands, where it is a truly national speech, the speech of all ranks of the community—the kingdom of Belgium, where, under the name of Flemish, it is striving for recognition, and has gained a place in literature through the pen of Hendrik Conscience—the old district of the Hanseatic cities, the Lower Elbe,



Hamburgh, Lübeck, Bremen,—all this is Nieder-Deutsch, Low Dutch.

8. To this family belongs the English language in respect of that which is the oldest and most material part of it. It has received so many additions from other sources, and has worked them up with so much individuality of effect, as to have in fact produced a new language, and a language which, from external circumstances, seems likely to become the parent of a new strain of languages. But all the outgrowth and exuberance of the English language clusters round a Low Dutch centre.

It would be a departure from the general way of philologists to include under the term of Low Dutch the languages of Scandinavia. The latter have very strong individualising features of their own, such as the post-positive article, and a form for the passive verb. The post-positive article is highly curious. In Modern Danish or Swedish the indefinite article *a* or *an* is represented by *en* for masculine and feminine, and *et* for neuter. Thus *en skov* signifies *a wood* (shaw) and *et træ* signifies *a tree*. But if you want to say *the wood*, *the tree*, you suffix the selfsame articles to the nouns, and then they have the effect of the definite article: *skoven*, the wood; *træet*, the tree; *Juletræet*, the Christmas tree.

9. The possession of a form for the passive is hardly less remarkable, when we consider that the Gothic languages in general make the passive, as we do in English, by the aid of the verb *to be*. Active *to love*, passive *to be loved*. But the Scandinavian dialects just add an *s* to the active, and that makes it passive. This *s* is a relic of an old reflexive pronoun, so that it is most like the French habit of getting a sort of a passive by prefixing the reflexive pronoun *se*. Thus in French *marier* is *to marry* (active), of parents who

marry their children ; but if you have to express *to marry* in the sense of to get married or to be married, you say *se marier*. Examples of the Danish passive form :—

## ACTIVE.

At give, *to give*  
 At elske, *to love*  
 At finde, *to find*  
 At faae, *to get*  
 At drive, *to drive*

## PASSIVE.

At gives, *to be given*  
 At elsker, *to be loved*  
 At findes, *to be found*  
 At faaes, *to be gotten*  
 At drives, *to be driven*

There is only one other language of this great family that has preserved any traces of a passive verb, and that is the Mæso-Gothic. Here the form was more elaborate than in the Scandinavian dialects, but was already far gone towards dissolution at the date of the extant writings. Between the Icelandic, or, to speak more generally, the Northern (Nor-ræna) speech on the one side, and the Mæso-Gothic on the other, we may figure to ourselves the base of the position of the Low Dutch half of the Gothic family.

10. A large proportion of the consonantal variations between the High Dutch on the one hand, and the Low Dutch on the other, may be symbolised by writing the German word *ſamt* over the English word *tame*, thus—

ſa m t  
 t a me

In this mnemonic, the final *e* of *tame* is there merely to make an English word of it, in order to indicate that the symbols *τ*, *α*, *μ*, in this place, are doing duty for the English group, that is, the Low Dutch group, in the comparison ; while the letters *ſa*, *mt*, *t*, which form a German word, represent the High Dutch side of the comparison. The combination of *ſa* is useful as a reminder that in High

Dutch a sibilant, that is *f* or *þ*, is very often the substitute for an aspirate.

Here follow two columns of Low Dutch in comparison with one of High Dutch.

---

TH

T

---

| N.H.D.<br>or GERMAN. | MÆSO-GOTHIC. | ENGLISH.     |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Behn                 | Taihun       | Ten          |
| Biel                 | Til          | Till         |
| Biemen               | Timan        | beTeem       |
| Bimmer               | Timr         | Timber       |
| Bünden               | Tindan       | Tinder       |
| Biehn                | Tiuhan       | Teon (A.S.)  |
| Beug                 | Taul         | Toy          |
| Bunge                | Tuggo        | Tongue       |
| Bahn                 | Tunthus      | Tooth        |
| Bwei                 | Tvai         | Two          |
| Bähre                | Tagr         | Tear         |
| Beichen              | Taikns       | Token        |
| Berren               | Tairan       | Tear         |
| Beigen               | Teihan       | Tæcan (A.S.) |

---

TH

A

---

|        |           |                |
|--------|-----------|----------------|
| Drei   | Threis    | Three          |
| Das    | Thata     | That           |
| Du     | Thu       | Thou           |
| Dich   | Thuk      | Thee           |
| Denken | Thagkjan  | Think          |
| Doch   | Thuh      | Though         |
| Dulden | Thulan    | Thole          |
| Den    | Thaim     | Them           |
| Durch  | Thairh    | Through        |
| Durst  | Thaurstei | Thirst         |
| Dann   | Than      | Then           |
| Dank   | Thagks    | Thank          |
| Dürfen | Thaurban  | pearfan (A.S.) |

| <div style="text-align: center;"> <hr/> Σ<br/> M<br/> <hr/> </div> |              |          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| N.H.D.<br>or GERMAN.                                               | MÆSO-GOTHIC. | ENGLISH. |
| Tag                                                                | Dags         | Day      |
| Teil                                                               | Dails        | Deal     |
| Tal                                                                | Dal          | Dale     |
| Taub                                                               | Daubs        | Deaf     |
| Tochter                                                            | Dauhtar      | Daughter |
| Taufen                                                             | Daupjan      | Dip      |
| Tor                                                                | Daur         | Door     |
| Tob                                                                | Dauthus      | Death    |
| Tat                                                                | Deds         | Deed     |
| Tragen                                                             | Dragen       | Drag     |
| Treiben                                                            | Dreiban      | Drive    |
| Trinken                                                            | Drigkjan     | Drink    |
| Teig                                                               | Daigs        | Dough    |

11. By the above lists it is made plain that the Mæso-Gothic sides with the English or Low Dutch, as against the German or High Dutch. A few examples to the same effect are here added from the Old High Dutch, as contrasted with the English, Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, and Scandinavian equivalents :—

| O. H. D. | ENGLISH, &c. |   | O. H. D. | ENGLISH, &c.         |
|----------|--------------|---|----------|----------------------|
| Zuo      | To           | } | Zies-tag | Tuesday              |
| Zagal    | Tail         |   | Ziht     | Tiht (A. S.)         |
| Zahar    | Tear         |   | Zil      | Till                 |
| Zala     | Tale         |   | Zimbar   | Timber               |
| Zeljan   | Tell         |   | Zit      | Tide                 |
| Zand     | Tooth        |   | Ziuhan   | Teon (A. S.)         |
| Zehan    | Ten          |   | Zugil    | Tackle               |
| Zeichan  | Token        |   | Zol      | Toll                 |
| Zelt     | Tent         |   | Zomi     | { Tom (Dan. & Swed.) |
| Zam      | Tame         |   |          | { Tomr (Isl.)        |
| Zerjan   | Tear         |   | Zorn     | { Torn (A. S.)       |
| Ziagal   | Tile         |   |          | { Toorn (Dutch.)     |

In like manner the Old High Dutch *Zota*, tuft, corresponds to our *Tot* in local names, as *Tothill*, or *Tuthill*.

The Old High German *zoum* is in Dutch *toom*, in Swedish *toem*, in Danish *toemme*, in Icelandic *taum*, in Anglo-Saxon *tyme*, and in English *team*.

12. The examples thus far are all based on initial letters: it will be well to shew like analogies in the middle and end of words. The comparison shall be confined to English and German, as being that which will be most generally useful and convenient. The mnemonic  $\left\{ \begin{smallmatrix} f a m t \\ t a m \end{smallmatrix} \right\}$  continues to mark the path of the Lautverschiebung between High and Low Dutch.

| Ca<br>T |        | M<br>A  |             | X<br>Me |            |
|---------|--------|---------|-------------|---------|------------|
| es      | it     | Erde    | earth       | Bett    | bed        |
| das     | that   | beide   | both        | Brot    | bread      |
| was     | what   | Lied    | leoð (A.S.) | Blut    | blood      |
| Loos    | lot    | Heide   | heath       | gut     | good       |
| süß     | sweet  | Widder  | wether      | Haut    | hide       |
| Faß     | fat    | Laub    | leaf        | laut    | loud¹      |
| Fuß     | foot   | Leben   | life        | leit    | lead       |
| groß    | great  | Streben | strife      | Mut     | mood       |
| Haß     | hate   | Liebe   | love        | Ort     | ord (A.S.) |
| heiß    | hot    | Habicht | havoc       | Reiter  | rider      |
| lauf    | leap   |         |             | Seite   | side       |
| Hauf    | heap   |         |             | Wort    | word       |
| weiß    | white  |         |             | wut     | wood       |
| Schweiß | sweat  |         |             | Gefe    | edge       |
| Wasser  | water  |         |             | Stoppel | stubble    |
| essen   | eat    |         |             |         |            |
| Nessel  | nettle |         |             |         |            |
| wissen  | wit    |         |             |         |            |
| Malz    | malt   |         |             |         |            |
| Münz    | mint   |         |             |         |            |
| Wurz    | wort   |         |             |         |            |
| Herz    | heart  |         |             |         |            |
| Netz    | net    |         |             |         |            |
| Hitze   | heat   |         |             |         |            |

These illustrations of the reciprocity of consonants are not

co-extensive with the whole scheme as devised by Grimm, but they contain the more obvious and conspicuous parts of it. What has been said will shew the nature of the Law, and a little reflection will make it clear that these analogies carry with them an evidence of original identity.

13. This evidence would be far less perfect than it is, but for the material which has been supplied by means of Christianity. To this cause we trace the preservation of the oldest literary records of our family of languages. In the fourth century Scripture was translated into Mæso-Gothic: in the seventh century Anglo-Saxon began to be cultivated by means of Christianity, and during five centuries were produced those writings which have partly survived. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the spread of Christianity northwards caused the Norsk Sagas to be committed to writing. Literary culture has been transplanted from the old into the midst of the young and rising peoples of the world, and hence it has come to pass that among the nations which have sprung into existence since Christianity, a better record of their primitive language has been preserved. Hence the striking fact that we can trace the written history of our English language within this island for the space of twelve hundred years. Christianity was the cause of its early cultivation; and this has made it possible for us to follow back the traces of our language into a far higher relative antiquity than that in which the languages of Greece and Rome first begin to emerge into historic view.

14. This has been very generally the case with the Christian nations of the world. Their literature begins with their conversion; and but for that event it would have been long delayed. The rude tribes of the distant islands have now, by means of the missionaries, the best books of the world translated into their own tongues; and this at a stage

of existence in which they could not produce a written record. How carefully the Mæso-Gothic language was considered and prepared for the expression of Scripture, becomes manifest to the philological student, when he examines those precious relics of the fourth century which bear the name of Ulphilas. Here we often meet the very words with which we are so familiar in our English Bible, but linked together by a flexional structure that finds no parallel short of Sanskrit. This is the oldest book we can go back to, as written in a language like our own. It has therefore a national interest for us; but apart from this, it has a nobility and grandeur all its own, as it is one of the finest specimens of ancient language. It is by this, and this alone, that we are able to realise to how high a pitch of inflection the speech of our own race was once carried. Inflections which in German, or even in Anglo-Saxon, are but fragmentarily preserved, like relics of an expiring fashion, are there seen standing forth in all their archaic rigidity and polysyllabicity.

15. In the subjoined Lord's Prayer the English is a little distorted in order to act as a guide to the Gothic words:—

### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

From the MÆSO-GOTHIC VERSION of ULPHILAS; made about A.D. 365.

*Aivaggelyo thairh Matthaiu.*

*Gospel througb Mattbew.*

*Atta unsar thu in himinam*

*Father our tbou in heaven*

*Veihnai namo thein.*

*Be-hallowed name tbine*

*Kvimai thiudinassus theins*

*Come kingdom tbine*

Vairthai vilja theins, svê in himina yah ana airthai  
*Be-done will thine as in heaven yea on earth*

Hlaif unsarana thana sinteinan gif uns himma daga  
*Loaf our the continuous give us this day.*

Yah aflet uns thatei skulans siyaima  
*Yea off-let us that-which owing we-be*

Svasve yah veis afletam thaim skulam unsaraim  
*So-as yea we off-let those debtors of ours*

Yah ni briggais uns in fraistubnyai  
*Yea not bring us in temptation*

Ak lausei uns af thamma ubilin  
*But loose us of the evil*

Unte theina ist thiudangardi  
*For thine is kingdom*

Yah mahts Yah vulthus  
*Yea might Yea glory*

In aivins. Amên.  
*In eternity. Amen.*

16. The Low Dutch family of languages falls into two natural divisions, the Southern or Teutonic Platt-Deutsch, and the Northern or Scandinavian. It was at the point of junction between these halves—at the neck of the Danish peninsula, along the banks of the Elbe, and along the south-west coasts of the Baltic—that our continental progenitors lived and spoke. A question has been raised, whether we are to be classed with the northern or the southern division of this great family.

A great deal may be said, and in fact has been said, to prove that we are Scandinavians, and to draw us over the middle border; but it generally resolves itself into a number of points of similarity rather than into an essential



and ancient similitude. Words and names are compared as if it were forgotten how largely we have borrowed from the Danes in historic times. Our word *back* may be called as evidence. The corresponding word is *bak* in Icelandic, and *bag* in Danish; but in German it has been long disused, and its place occupied by *Rücken*. The other word had in the High Dutch at an early date acquired that special sense which gave to the old French language the word *bacon*, now so familiar in England. The general word for dorsum has long been *bak* in the northern branch of the Gothic family, and *Rücken* in the southern or Teutonic half. We retain both of these words; *back* and *ridge* are equally terms of general import with us.

17. The Saxons were a border people, and spoke a Low Dutch strongly impregnated with Scandinavian associations. But the more we go back into the elder forms on either side, the more does it seem to come out clear, that our mother tongue is, in fundamentals, to be identified with the *Platt-Deutsch*, the dialect of the Hanseatic cities, the dialect which has been erected into a national language in that which we call the *Dutch*, as spoken in the kingdom of the Netherlands. The people of Bremen call their dialect *Nieder Sächsisch*, i. e. Lowland Saxon; and the genuine original 'Saxony' of European history was in this part, namely, the middle and lower *biet* of the Elbe. The name of 'Saxon' has always adhered to our nation, though we have seemed almost as if we had been willing to divest ourselves of it. We have called our country *England*, and our language *English*: yet our neighbours west and north, the Welsh and the Gael, have still called us Saxons, and our language Saxonish. It has become the literary habit of recent times to use the term 'Saxon' as a distinction for the early period of our history and language and literature, and to reserve the term,

‘English’ for the later period. There is some degree of literary impropriety in this, because the Saxons called their own language *Englisc*. On this ground some critics insist that we should let the word *English* stand for the whole extent of our insular history, which they would divide into Old English, Middle English, and New English. But on the whole, the terms already in use seem bolder, and more distinct. They enable us to distinguish between Saxon and Anglian; and they also comprise the united nation under the compound term Anglo-Saxon. As expressive of the dominant power, it is not very irregular to call the whole nation briefly SAXON.

## § 2. *Domestic relations.*

18. We have no contemporary account of the Saxon colonisation. The story which Bæda gives us in the eighth century, is, that there were people from three tribes, Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. The latter were said to be still distinguishable in Kent and the Isle of Wight; but, except in this statement, we have lost all trace of the Jutes. The Angles and Saxons long stood apart and distinct from one another; they had each a corner of their own. The Anglians occupied the north and east of England, and the Saxons the south and west. The line of Watling Street, running from London to Chester, may be taken as the boundary line between these races, whom we shall sometimes combine, according to prevalent usage, under the joint name of Anglo-Saxons, or under the dominant name of Saxons.

When the Anglo-Saxons began to make themselves masters of this island, they found here a population which is known in history as the British race. This people spoke the language which is now represented by the Welsh. It was an ancient

Keltic dialect somewhat tinged with Latin. The Britons had been in subjection to Roman dominion for a space of between three and four centuries. This would naturally have left a trace upon their language. And hence we find that of the words which the Saxons learnt from the Britons, some are undoubted Latin, others are doubtful whether they should be called Latin or Keltic. Of the first class are those elements of local nomenclature, -CHESTER, from *castrum*, a fortified place—Saxon form, *ceaster* : STREET, from *strata*, i. e. 'via strata' = a causeway—Saxon form, *stræt* : PORT, a word derived from the Latin *porta*, a gate, signified in Saxon times just 'a town, a market-town.' This is the sense of it in such a compound as Newport Pagnell. WALL, Saxon *weall*, is through the same filtered process a descendant of the Latin *vallum*, a rampart : MIL, from the Latin '*milia passuum*,' a thousand paces, has lived through all the ages to our day, and we are the only people of Western Europe who still make use of this Roman measure of distance. The French keep to their *league* (*lieue*), the measure which they had in use before the Romans troubled them, the old Keltic *leuga*. In Saxon poetry we find the old highways called by the suggestive name of *milpaðas*, the mile-paths. CARCERN, a prison, is the Latin *carcer*, with the Saxon word *ern*, a building, mingled into the last syllable : TIGOL, a tile, is the Roman *tegula*. At this time, too, we must have received the names of many plants and fruits, as PYRIGE, the pear, Latin *pyrus*.

19. Many of the words which pertain to the personal and social comforts of life, were in this manner learnt at second-hand from Roman culture : as DISC, a dish, from his handing of which a royal officer all through the Saxon period bore the title of DISC-ÞEĠN, dish-thane.

When we consider that there was much originally in common between the Latin and the Keltic, and, even again,

between these two and the Gothic languages, it is no matter of surprise that after so long a period we should find it difficult to sift out with absolute distinctness the words which we owe to the British influence. The most certain are those names of rivers and mountains, and some elements in the names of ancient towns, which have been handed on from Keltic times to ours. Thus the river-name *Avon* is unquestionably British, and it is the common word for river in Wales to this day. So again with regard to that large class of river-names which are merely variations of the one name *Isca*—*Usk*, *Ux*, *Wis*—in *Wisbech*, *The Wash*, *Axe*, *Exe*, *Esk* in the *Lothians*, *Ouse*, by academic corruption *Isis*, and by municipal corruption *Ox*—in *Oxford*. All these are but many forms of one Keltic word, *uisg*, water; which is found in *usquebagh*, the Irish for *eau-de-vie*, and in the word *whiskey*. There are however, on our map, a great many names of rivers and cities and mountains, of which, though so precise an account cannot be rendered, it is generally concluded that they are British—because they run back historically into the time when British was prevalent—because they are not Saxon—because, in short, they cannot otherwise be accounted for. Such are, *Thames*, *Tamar*, *Frome*, *Derwent*, *Trent*, *Tweed*, *Severn*, and the bulk of our river-names. In like manner of the oldest town-names, and some names of districts.

20. The first syllable in *Winchester* appears, through the Latin form of *Venta*, to have been the same as the Welsh *gwent*, a plain or open country. The first syllable in *Manchester* is probably the old Keltic *MAN*, place; just as it probably is in the archaic name for *Bath*, *Ake-manchester*. *York* is so called from the Keltic river-name *Eure*; from an elder form of which came the old Latin form of the city-name *Ebur-acum*. But often where the sense cannot

be so plainly traced, we acquiesce in the opinion that names are British, because their place in history seems to require it. Such are, for instance, *Kent*, *London*, *Gloucester*.

We will add a few words that have a fair Keltic reputation, *basket*, *bran*, *breeches*, *clout*, *crag*, *crock*, *down*, *den*, *manor*, *paddock*, *want*, *wicket*. The word *moor*, for wild or waste land, I imagine to be Keltic, but naturalised by the Saxons on the continent before the immigration.

It is very probable that a few Keltic words are still living on among us in the popular names of wild plants. The *cockle* of our corn-fields has been with great reason attributed to the Britons. The Saxon form is *coccel*, but the word is not found in the kindred dialects. This is the more remarkable, because most of the tree and plant names are common to us with the German, Dutch, Danish, &c. The words *alder*, *apple*, *ash*, *aspen*, *beam*, *bean*, *beech*, *bere*, *birch*, *bloom*, *blossom*, *bramble*, *clover*, *corn*, *elm*, *flax*, *grass*, *holt*, *leek*, *lime*, *moss*, *nightshade*, *oak*, *radish*, *reed*, *root*, *rye*, *shaw*, *thistle*, *thorn*, *tree*, *waybread*, *weed*, *wheat*, *wood*, *wormwood*, *wort*, *yarrow*, *yew*,—are more or less common to the cognate languages. This is not the case with *cockle*, and therefore it may perhaps be British. Another plant-name, which is probably British, is *willow*. This may well be traced to the Welsh *helig* as its nearer relative, without interfering with the more distant claims of *saugh*, *sallow*, *salix*. *Whin* also, and *furze*, have perhaps a right here. With strong probability also may we add to this botanical list the terms *husk*, *haw*, and more particularly *cod*, a word that merits a special remark. In Anglo-Saxon times it meant a bag, a purse or wallet.<sup>1</sup> Thence it was applied to the seed-bags of plants, as *pease-cod*. This seems to be the Welsh

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<sup>1</sup> See a spirited passage in the Saxon Chronicle of Peterborough, A.D. 1131, and my note there.

*cwd.* The puff-ball is in Welsh *cwd-y-mwg*, bag of smoke. Owen Pughe quotes this Welsh adage:—‘Egor dy gwd pan gaech borchell’: i.e. ‘Open thy bag when canst get a pig!’—an expression which for picturesqueness must be allowed the palm over our English proverb ‘Never say no to a good offer.’ What establishes the British origin of this word is the large connection it has in Welsh, and its appearance also in Brittany. Thus in Welsh there is the diminutive form *cydyn*, a little pouch, and the verb *cuddio*, to hide, with many allied words; in Breton there is *kôd*, pocket.

The compound *cock-boat* is probably a bilingual compound, of which the first part is the Welsh *cwch*, a boat, a word which has several derivatives in Welsh. ●

The word *clock*, which signifies *bell* in German (*Glocke*) and in French (*cloche*), is undoubtedly Keltic. A bell in Welsh is *clôch*, in Gaelic *clag*, and in Manx *clag*. But this word did not come into our language (probably) till the twelfth century.

*Bard* is unquestionably British, and so is *glen*, and likewise *flannel*; but then these made their entry later, and do not belong to the present subject, which is the immediate influence of the British on the Saxon.

21. We can never expect to know with anything like precision what were the relations of the British and Saxon languages to each other and to the Latin language, until each has been studied comparatively to a degree of exactness beyond anything which has yet been attempted. All the Gothic dialects must be taken into comparison on the one hand, and all the Keltic dialects on the other. The interesting question for us is—*How far the British population at large was Romanised?* Some think that habits of speaking Latin were almost universal, and they appeal to the rude inscribed stones of the earlier centuries which are found in

Wales, and which are in a Latin base enough to be attributed to illiterate stonemasons. On this view, which receives support also from the number of Latin words in Welsh, the arrival of the Saxons prevented this island from being the home of a Romanesque people like the French or Spanish.

22. The British language as now spoken in Wales is called, by those who speak it, *Cymraeg*; but the Anglo-Saxons called it *Wylsc*, and the people who spoke it they called *Walas*, which we have modernised into *Wales* and *Welsh*. So the Germans of the continent called the Italians and their language *Welsch*. At various points on the frontiers of our race, we find them affixing this name on the conterminous Romance-speaking people. This is the most probable account of the names *Wallachia*, the *Walloon*s in Belgium, and the Canton *Wallis* in Switzerland. On this principle we called the Romanised Britons, and the Germans called the Italians, by the same name—Welsh. In Acts x. 1, where we read ‘Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,’ Luther’s version has ‘Cornelius, ein Hauptmann von der Schaar, die da heisst die Welsche.’ The French, who were such unwelcome visitors and settlers in this country in the reign of Edward the Confessor, are called by the contemporary annalist ‘*þa welisce men.*’ When Edward himself came from the life of an exile in France, he was said by the chronicler to have come ‘*hider to land of weallande.*’ It is the same word which forms the last syllable in *Cornwall*, for the Kelts who dwelt there were by the Saxons named the *Walas* of Kernyw.

The word was *weal* or *wealth*, feminine *wylen*; and it is an illustration of the servile condition to which the old inhabitants were reduced, that the words *wealth* and *wylen* were used to signify male and female slave.

§ 3. *Influence of the Church on the Language.*

23. About the year A.D. 600, Christianity began to be received by the Saxons. The Jutish kingdom of Kent was the first that received the Gospel, and the Church was supreme in Kent before Northumbria began to be converted. Yet the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria gained afterwards the leading position as a Christian nation in Saxondom; and being distinguished for learning and literature as well as for zeal, this people exerted a permanent influence on the national language. Intimately connected with this is the political supremacy which the northern kingdom enjoyed in this island for a hundred years. It is evident that there was great and substantial progress in religion, civilisation, and learning; of which fact the permanent memorial is the name and works of Bæda, who died in 735, after having seen the decline of the greatness of his people.

While Canterbury was the metropolis of Christianity, the kingdom of Northumbria was its most powerful seat. It was the securing of this national Church in the Roman interest that effectually put a stop to the progress of the Scotian discipline in this island. The power which this nation wielded, and the admiration she excited in her neighbours, caused them to emulate her example, to read her books, to form their language after hers, and to call it ENGLISC. The Angles first produced a cultivated book-speech, and they had the natural reward of inventors and pioneers, that of setting a name to their product. Of all the losses which are deplored by the investigator of the English language, perhaps there is none greater than this, that the whole Anglian vernacular literature should have perished in the ravages of the Danes upon the Northumbrian monasteries. Of the existence of such a native



literature there is no room for doubt. Bæda tells us of such ; and he himself was occupied on a translation when he died. Thus the obscure name of *Angle* emerged into celebrity, and being accepted first for the generic name of the Saxon language, passed next to the land, and afterwards, to the inhabitants of the land. And now, as in the early time, though it does not designate the British Empire, yet it does designate the language which is the common vehicle of thought throughout that Empire.

24. The extant works of Bæda are all in Latin, but they afford occasional glimpses of information about the spoken Englisc of his day. As for example, in the *Epistle to Ecgberht*, he advises that prelate to make all his flock learn by heart the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. In Latin, if they understand it, by all means, says he,—but in their own tongue if they do not know Latin. Which, he adds, is not only the case with laity, but with clerks likewise and monks. And markedly insisting on his theme, as if even then the battle of the vernacular had to be fought, he goes on to give his reasons why he had often given copies of translations to folk that were no scholars, and many of them priests too.

One of his most interesting chapters is that in which he gives the traditional story of the vernacular poet Cædmon, who by divine inspiration was gifted with the power of song, for the express purpose of rendering the Scripture narratives into popular verse. The extant poems of the Creation and Fall and Redemption, which are preserved in archaic Saxon verse, are attributed to this Cædmon ; and it is possible that they may be his work, having undergone in the process of copying a partial modernisation. We gather from the account in Bæda, that the practice of making ballads was in a high state of activity, and also that vernacular poetry was used as a vehicle of popular instruction in the seventh

century in Northumbria. And it is interesting to reflect that in all our island there is no district which to this day has an equal reputation for lyric poetry, whether we think of the mediæval ballads, or of Burns, or of the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.

25. It was in the monastery of Whitby, under the famous government of the abbess Hilda, that the first sacred poet of our race devoted his life to the vocation to which he had been mysteriously called. If something of the legendary hangs over his personal history, this only shews how strongly his poetry had stirred the imagination of his people. A nation that could believe their poet to be divinely called, was the nation to produce poets, and to elevate the genius of their language. Such was the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria, and here it was that our language first received high cultivation.

It is remarkable that, while the peoples of the southern and western and south-eastern parts of the kingdom continually called themselves Saxons (whence such local names as Wessex, Essex, Sussex, Middlesex), yet they never appear in any of their extant literature to call their language Seaxisc, but always ENGLISC<sup>1</sup>. The explanation of this must be sought, as I have already indicated, in that early leadership which was enjoyed by the kingdom of Northumbria in the seventh and eighth centuries. The office of BRETWALDA, a kind of elective chieftainship of all Britain, was held by several Northumbrian kings in succession. How high this title must have sounded in the ears of cotemporaries may be imagined from the fact that it is after the same model as their name for the Almighty. The latter was

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<sup>1</sup> Yet we find the Latin equivalent of *Seaxisc*, as in Asser's *Life of Alfred*, where the vernacular is called *Saxonica lingua*. Asser however was a Welshman. In Cod. Dipl. 241, 'in commune silfa q' nos saxonice in *gemennisse* dicimus.' Also 83,3, 867.

ALWALDA, the All-wielding. So Bretwalda was the wielder of Britain, or the Emperor of all the States in Britain.

26. The culture of Northumbria overlived the term of its political supremacy. For a century and a half the northern part of the island was distinguished by the growth of a native Christian literature, and of Christian art. Two names are prominently associated with this Northumbrian school, and they also mark the extremities of the brightest part of its duration. The first is Benedict Biscop, an Anglian by birth, who made five visits to Rome, and founded the monastery of Wearmouth in 672. The other was Alcuin, by whose aid Charlemagne laid the foundations of learning in his vast dominions. Alcuin died in 805.

Scripture translations, sacred hymns, and books of devotion were the most active instruments of this development. Alongside of these were retained the old heroic songs and epics of national story; sometimes in the ancient form, sometimes in revised and modernised versions. We may reasonably suppose that the *Beowulf* then received those last touches which are still visible to the reader as masking or softening the latent heathendom of that poem. They also had their domestic annals, written in the Anglian dialect of Northumbria. All this vernacular literature perished under the ravages of the Danes in the ninth century: but not until the torch of learning had been kindled in some of the southern parts, enough to secure its revival at a favourable opportunity. That opportunity offered itself under the reign of Alfred, who cleared his part of the country of the Danish scourge, and was the first to renew the arts of peace. With the mention of Alfred's name, we enter upon a comparatively modern era of the language, and quit the obscurity of the pre-Danish period. Wessex, or the country of the West Saxons, becomes the arena of our

narrative henceforth, and the Anglian does not claim notice again until the fifteenth century, when that dialect had shaped itself into a new and distinct national language for the kingdom of Scotland. The poet in whose works the Scottish language first displays its definite form, is Dunbar, a great admirer of Chaucer. From the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries there was a thriving national literature in the Anglian dialect, of which the specimens best known on the south of the Tweed are the works of Allan Ramsay and Robert Burns, and the dialogues in 'brad Scots,' which so charmingly diversify the novels of Sir Walter Scott. It is odd that this language, which is in fact genuine Anglian, should have received the Keltic name of 'Scotch' from the Scotian dynasty which mounted the Anglian throne, and that in taking a modern name from its northern neighbours it should have furnished a geographical parallel to the adoption of the name of 'English' by the West Saxons.

27. Wessex had not been entirely destitute of men of learning during the period in which the focus of civilisation was in Northumbria. Aldhelm is the first name of eminence in southern literature. He died in A.D. 709. He translated the Psalms of David into his native tongue, and composed popular hymns to drive out the old pagan songs. But though we can point to Aldhelm, and one or two other names of cultivated men in Wessex, they are exceptions to the general rudeness and uncultured state of that kingdom before Alfred's time. Wessex had been distinguished for its military rather than for its literary successes. Learning had resided northward. But in the ninth century a great revolution occurred. Northumbria and Mercia fell into the hands of the heathen Danes, and culture was obliterated in those parts which had hitherto been most enlightened. It was Alfred's first care, after he had won the security of his

kingdom, to restore learning. We have it in his own words, that at his accession very few priests to the south of the Humber could understand their Latin service, or translate a letter from Latin into English; 'and,' he adds, 'I ween there were not many beyond Humber either'—pointing to the heathen darkness in which the north was now shrouded.

This famous passage has such a freshness about it, and is altogether so remarkable, that I quote it in the original, with Mr. Henry Sweet's translation. It is from a circular preface, at the head of Alfred's Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care, addressed to the several bishops:—

DEOS HOC SCEAL TO WIOGORA CEASTRE.

THIS BOOK IS FOR WORCESTER.

Ælfred kyning hateð gretan Wærferð  
 biſceþ his wordum luſlice and freond-  
 lice; and ðe cyðan hate ðæt me com  
 swiðe oft on gemynd, hwelce wiotan  
 iu wæron giond Angelcynn, ægðer ge  
 godcundra hada ge woruldcundra; and  
 hu geſæliglica tida ða wæron giond  
 Angelcynn; and hu ða kyningas ðe  
 ðone onwald hæfdon ðæs folces on  
 ðam dagum Gode and his ærend-  
 wrecum herſumedon; and hie ægðer  
 ge hiora sibbe ge hiora ſiðo ge hiora  
 onweald innanbordes gehioldon, and  
 eac út hiora eðel gerymdon; and hu  
 him ða ſpeow ægðer ge mid wige ge  
 mid wiſdome; and eac ða godcundan  
 hadas hu giorne hie wæron ægðer  
 ge ymb lare ge ymb liornunga, ge  
 ymb ealle ða ðiowotdomas ðe hie  
 Gode ſcoldon; and hu man utan-  
 bordes wiſdom and lare hieder on  
 lond ſohte, and hu we hie nu ſceoldon  
 ute begietan gif we hie habban ſceol-  
 don. Swa clæne hio wæs oðſeallenu

*King Alfred bids greet biſhop  
 Wærferð with his words lovingly and  
 with friendſhip; and I let it be known  
 to thee that it has very often come into  
 my mind, what wiſe men there for-  
 merly were throughout England, both  
 of ſacred and ſecular orders<sup>1</sup>; and  
 how happy times there were then  
 throughout England; and how the  
 kings who had power over the nation  
 in thoſe days obeyed God and his  
 miniſters; and they preſerved peace,  
 morality, and order at home, and at  
 the ſame time enlarged their territory  
 abroad; and how they proſpered both  
 with war and with wiſdom; and alſo  
 the ſacred orders<sup>1</sup> how zealous they  
 were both in teaching and learning,  
 and in all the ſervices they owed to  
 God; and how foreigners came to  
 this land in ſearch of wiſdom and  
 inſtruction, and how we ſhould now  
 have to get them from abroad if we  
 were to have them. So general was*

<sup>1</sup> I do not ſuppoſe that the tranſlator intended this word in its eccleſiaſtical ſenſe excluſively, but rather in the general ſenſe of 'eſtates or conditions of men.' Juſt below 'orders' had its common eccleſiaſtical ſenſe. This is a uſeful example to ſhew that where a word is repeated in an original text, we cannot always ſecurely tranſlate it by a parallel repetition.

ǫn Angelcynne ƿæt swiƿe feawa  
 wæron behionan Humbre ƿe hiora  
 ƿeninga cuðen understondan ǫn  
 Englisc, oððe furðum æn ærendgewrit  
 of Lædene ǫn Englisc areccean; and  
 ic wene ƿæt noht monige begiendan  
 Humbre næren. Swæ feawa hiora  
 wæron ƿæt ic furðum anne ænlepne  
 ne mæg geðencean besuðan Temese  
 ƿa ƿa ic to rice feng. Gode æl-  
 mihtegum sie ðonc ƿæt we nu ænigne  
 ǫn stal habbað lareowa.

*its decay in England that there were  
 very few on this side of the Humber  
 who could understand their rituals in  
 English, or translate a letter from  
 Latin into English; and I believe  
 that there were not many beyond the  
 Humber. There were so few of them  
 that I cannot remember a single one  
 south of the Thames when I came to  
 the throne. Thanks be to God Al-  
 mighty that we have any teachers  
 among us now.*

Alfred's endeavours were successful and fruitful: he inaugurated an era for his country.

28. With him, that is to say, in the last quarter of the ninth century, Saxon literature starts up almost full-grown. It seems as if it grew up suddenly, and reached perfection at a bound without preparation or antecedents. It has been too much the habit to suppose that this phenomenon is sufficiently accounted for by the introduction of scholars from other countries who helped to translate the most esteemed books into Saxon. So the reign of Alfred is apt to get paralleled with those rude tribes among whom our missionaries introduce a translated literature at the same time with the arts of reading and writing. It has not been sufficiently considered that such translations are dependent on the previous exercise of the native tongue, and that foreign help can only bring up a wild language to eloquence by very slow degrees. There is a very vague idea among us that our language was then in its infancy, and that its compass was as narrow as the few necessary ideas of savage life. A modern Italian turning over a Latin book might think it looked very barbarous; and perhaps even some moderate scholars have never appreciated to how great a power the Latin tongue had attained long before the Augustan era. Great languages are not built in a day. The fact is that

Wessex inherited a cultivated language from the north, and that when they called their translations Englisc and not Seaxisc, they acknowledged that debt. The cultivated Anglian dialect became the literary medium of hitherto uncultured Wessex; just as the dialect of the Latian cities set the form of the imperial language of Rome, and was called Latin; and the dialect of Castile was the foundation of the literary Spanish.

29. Of this Englisc language as it was used in Scripture versions and Church services, the Lord's Prayer forms the readiest illustration.

### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

FROM ALFRED'S VERSION of the GOSPELS.

*Matt. vi.*

Fæder ure, þu þe eart on heofenum  
*Father our, thou that art in heaven*

Si þin nama gehalgod  
*Be thy name ballowed*

To becume thin rice  
*Come thy kingdom*

Geweorþe þin willa on corþan, swa-swa on heofenum  
*Be-done thy will on earth, so-as in heaven*

Urne dæghwamlican hlaf syle us to dæg  
*Our daily loaf give us to day*

And forgyf us ure gyltas, swa-swa we forgyfaþ urum gyltendum  
*And forgive us our debts, so-as we forgive our debtors*

And ne gelæde þu us on costnunge, ac alys us of yfle  
*And not lead thou us into temptation, but loose us of evil*

Soplice.

*Sootbly (or, Amen).*

The period of West-Saxon leadership extends from Alfred to the Conquest, about A.D. 880 to A.D. 1066. These figures represent also the interval at which Saxon literature was strongest; but its duration exceeds these limits at either end. We have poetry, laws, and annals before 880, and we have large and important continuations of Saxon Chronicles after 1066. Perhaps the most natural date to adopt as the term of Saxon literature would be A.D. 1154, the year of King Stephen's death, the last year that is chronicled in Saxon.

#### § 4. *Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon.*

30. The Saxon differed from modern English most conspicuously in being what is called an inflected language. An inflected language is one that joins words together, and makes them into sentences, not by means of a set of small secondary and auxiliary words, but by means of changes made in the main words themselves. If we look at a page of modern English, we see not only nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, these words of primary necessity, but also a sprinkling of little interpreters among the greater words; and the relations of the great words to one another are expressed by the little ones that fill the spaces between them. Such are the pronouns, articles, prepositions, and conjunctions. In more general terms it may be said that the essence of an inflected language is, to express by modifications of form that which an uninflected language expresses by arrangement of words. So that in the inflected language more is expressed by single words than in the non-inflected. Take as an example these words of the Preacher, and see how differently they are constructed in English and in Latin:—



*Eccles. iii.*

Tempus nascendi, et tempus moriendi; tempus plantandi, et tempus evellendi quod plantatum est.

A time *to be* born, and a time *to die*; a time *to plant*, and a time *to pluck-up that* which is planted.

Tempus occidendi, et tempus sanandi; tempus destruendi, et tempus ædificandi.

A time *to kill*, and a time *to heal*; a time *to break down*, and a time *to build up*.

Tempus flendi, et tempus ridendi; tempus plangendi, et tempus saltandi.

A time *to weep*, and a time *to laugh*; a time *to mourn*, and a time *to dance*.

Tempus spargendi lapides, et tempus colligendi.

A time *to cast away* stones, and a time *to gather stones together*.

There are no words in the Latin answering to these little words which are italicised in the English version—*a, the, to, of, be*—yet the very sense of the passage depends upon them in English, often to such a degree that if one of these were to be changed, the sense would be completely overturned. The Latin has no words corresponding to these little words, but it has an equivalent of another kind. The terminations of the Latin words undergo changes which are expressive of all these modifications of sense; and these changes of the forms of words are called Inflections.

31. The following piece may serve to illustrate the Saxon inflections:—

Upahafenum eagum on þa heah-  
nysses and aþenedum earmum ongan  
gebiddan mid þæra welera styrung-  
um on stilnesse.

*With* uplifted eyes to the height  
and *with* outstretched arms *she* be-  
gan *to* pray with stirrings *of* the lips  
in stillness.

Here we observe in the first place, that terminations in the elder speech are replaced by prepositions in the younger: 'Upahafenum eagum' is '*with* uplifted eyes,' and aþenedum earmum' is '*with* outstretched arms'; and the infinitive termination of the verb 'gebiddan' is in English represented by the preposition *to*.

We observe however in the second place, that there are

prepositions among the inflections. The phrases '*on þa heahnysse*,' '*mid . . . stýringum*,' '*on stilnesse*,' are at once phrasal and inflectional. This indicates a new growth in the language: the inflections are no longer what once they were, self-sufficient. Prepositions are brought to their aid, and very soon the whole weight of the function falls on the preposition. The inflection then lives on as a familiar heirloom in the language, an ancient fashion, ornamental rather than necessary. At the first great shake which such a language gets, after it is well furnished with prepositions, there will most likely be a great shedding of inflections. And so it happened to our language after the shock of the Conquest, as will be told in its place.

We should not pass on without observing, that this condition of a language, in which it is provided with a double mechanism for the purposes of syntax, is one eminently favourable to expression, being precisely that of the ancient Greek and of the modern German. The old flexions serve to convey feeling, sentiment, association, all that is æsthetic in literature; the prepositions and other intermediaries seek to satisfy the demands of the intellect for clear and definite and unambiguous statement. The excellence of Saxon as a field of study is greatly enhanced by the circumstance that two eras live on side by side in that language: the one in the old poetry, which is almost entirely flexional; the other mixed of flexion and phrase, in the prose and later poetry. Sharon Turner has some sentences on this head, which, though not exact, are worth quoting:—

'Another prevailing feature of the Anglo-Saxon poetry was the omission of the little particles of speech, those abbreviations of language which are the invention [?] of man in the more cultivated ages of society, and which contribute to express our meaning more discriminatingly, and to make

it more clearly understood. The prose and poetry of Alfred's translation of Boethius will enable us to illustrate this remark. Where the prose says, *Thu the on tham ecan setle ricast, Thou who on the cternal seat reignest*; the poetry of the same passage has *Thu on heahsetle ecan ricast, Thou on high-seat-eternal reignest*: omitting the explaining and connecting particles, *the* and *tham*. . . . Thus, the phrase in Alfred's prose "So doth the moon with his pale light, that the bright stars he obscures in the heavens," is put by him in his poetry thus:—

With pale light  
Bright stars  
Moon lesseneth.

*History of the Anglo-Saxons, bk. xii. c. i.*

32. But it is not in the scheme of its grammar alone that human speech is subject to change: this liability extends to the vocabulary also. There is a constant movement in human language, though that movement is neither uniform in all languages, nor is it evenly distributed in its action within the limits of any one given language. It might almost be imagined as if there were a pivot somewhere in the motion, and as if the elemental parts were more or less moveable in proportion as they lay farther from, or nearer to that pole or pivot of revolution. Accordingly, we see words like **man, word, thing, can, smith, heap, on, with, an**, which seem like permanent fixtures through the ages, and at first sight we might think that they had suffered no change within the horizon of our observation. They are found in our oldest extant writings spelt just as we now spell them, and for this very reason it is the more necessary to call attention to the change that has really passed over them.

There are others, on the contrary, which have long been obsolete and forgotten, for which new words have been long ago substituted. Sometimes a whole series of substitutions

successively superseding each other have occupied the place of an old Saxon word. The Saxon *wilodlice* was in the middle ages represented by *verily*, and in modern times by *certainly*. The verb *gehyrsumian* passed away, and instead of it we find the expression *to be buxom*, and this yielded to the modern verb *to obey*. One might construct a table of words which have succeeded one another in the successive eras of our language, the new sometimes superseding the old, and sometimes, even oftener, living along peaceably by their side:—

| GOthic.   | ROMANESQUE. | CLASSIC.      |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| wonder    | marvel      | admiration    |
| rewth     | pity        | compassion    |
| hap       | chance      | accident      |
| look      | mien        | expression    |
| kind      | sort        | species       |
| beginning | commencing  | incipient     |
| ingoin    | entrance    | adit, ingress |
| outgoing  | issue       | exit, egress  |
| mouth     | embouchure  | æstuary       |
| yield     | grant       | concede       |

The words which have thus succeeded one another do not always cover equal areas: the elder word is usually the more comprehensive, and the later words are apt to be more specific, as in the following instances:—

|            |          |              |
|------------|----------|--------------|
| hād, A. S. | { order  | { class      |
|            | { estate |              |
|            |          |              |
|            |          |              |
|            |          |              |
|            |          | section      |
|            |          | condition    |
|            |          | position     |
|            |          | denomination |
|            |          | interest     |

33. In all such instances the change is conspicuous, and requires little comment; but in the former set it requires some attention to seize the alteration which has taken place. **Man** spells in old Saxon as in modern English, but yet it has altered in grammatical habit, in application, and in convertible use. In grammatical habit

it has altered; for in Saxon it had a genitive **mannes**, a dative **men**, an (archaic) accusative **mannan**, a plural **men**, a genitive plural **manna**, and a dative plural **mannum**. Of these it has lost the whole, except the formation of the simple plural. In application it has altered; for in Saxon times **man** was equally applicable to womankind as to mankind, whereas now it is limited to one sex. In convertible use it has suffered greatly; for the Saxon speech enjoyed the possession of this word as a pronoun, just as the Germans do to this day. In German *man sagt* = *man says*, which we do not use, and is equivalent to our expression *they say* or *it is said*. In German they distinguish between the substantive and the pronoun by giving the former a double *n* at the close, in addition to the distinction of the initial capital, which in German belongs to all substantives: thus, substantive *Mann*, pronoun *man*. In Saxon (towards the close of the period) the distinction of the *n* is sometimes seen, with a preference of the vowel *a* for the substantive, and *o* for the pronoun. The following is from a brief summary of Christian duties, written probably in the second half of the eleventh century:—

|                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ærest mon sceal God lufian . . . | First, we must love God . . . we  |
| Ne sceal mon mann slean . . . ac | must not slay man . . . but every |
| ælcne mann mon sceal ā weorþian. | man we must aye respect: and no   |
| and ne sceal nan mann don oðrum  | man should do to another that he  |
| þæt he nelle þæt him mon do.     | would not to himself were done.   |

Our language is at present singularly embarrassed for want of this most useful pronoun. At one time we have to put a *we*, at another time a *you*, at another time a *they*, at other times *one* or *somebody*; and it often happens that none of these three will serve, and we must have recourse to the passive verb, as in the close of the quotation. There are probably few English speakers or writers who have not felt the awkwardness resulting from our loss of this most

regrettable old pronoun. No other of the great languages labours under a like inability. So far about the word **man**, which is an example of the slowest-moving of words, which has not altered in its spelling, and which is yet seen to have undergone alterations of another kind. The other instances shall be more lightly touched on.

**34. Thing.** This word had to itself a large symbolic function which is now partitioned: 'On mang þisum þingum,' among these things; 'Ic seah sellic þing singan on recede,' I saw a strange thing singing on the hall. But in Saxon it covered a greater variety of ground than it does now: 'Me wearð Grendles þing undyrne cuð,' the *matter* of Grendel was made known to me; 'Beadohilde ne wæs hyre broðra deað on sefan swa sâr, swa hyre sylfre þing,' her brothers' death was not so sore on Beadohild's heart as was her own *concern*; 'For his þingum,' on his *account*.

**35. Smith.** This word is now applied only to handicraftsmen in metals. But in early literature it had its metaphorical applications. Not only do we read of the armourer by the name of wæpna smið, the weapon-smith; but we have the promoter of laughter called hleahtor-smið, laughter-smith; we have the teacher called lâr-smið, lore-smith; we have the warrior called wig-smið, war-smith.

**36. Heap** is now only applied to inert matter, but in Saxon to a crowd of men: as, 'þegna heap,' an assembly of thanes; 'Hengestes heap,' Hengest's troop. (*Beowulf*, 1091.)

**Can.** This verb was used in Saxon in a manner very like its present employment. But when we examine into it, we find the sense attached to it was not, as now, that of possibility, but of knowledge and skill. When a boy in his French exercises comes to the sentence 'Can you swim?' he is directed to render it into French by 'Savez vous nager?' that is 'Know you to swim?' The very same idea

is (philologically) at the bottom of 'Can you swim?' for in Saxon *CUNNAN* is to know; 'Ic can,' I know; 'þu canst,' thou knowest. It had, moreover, a use in Saxon which it has now lost, but which it has retained in German, where *fennen*, to know, is the proper word for speaking of acquaintance with persons. So in Saxon: 'Canst þu þone preost þe is gehaten Eadsige?' knowest thou the priest that is called Eadsige?

37. *On*, the preposition, exists in Saxon, but its area of incidence has shifted. We often find that an Anglo-Saxon *on* cannot be rendered by the same preposition in modern English, e. g. 'þone þe he geseah on þære cyrcan,' whom he saw *in* the church; 'Landferð se ofersæwisca hit gesette on Leden,' Landferth from over the sea put it *into* Latin; 'Swa swa we on bocum redað,' as we read *in* books; 'Sum mann on Winceastre,' a man *at* Winchester. In certain cases where *of* is now used, as, 'bishop of Winchester,' 'abbot of Abingdon,' we find *on* in the Saxon formula: 'biscop on Winceastre,' 'abbot on Abbandune.' There are, however, instances in which this preposition needs not to be otherwise rendered in modern English, e. g. 'Eode him þa ham hal on his fotum, se þe ær was geboren on bære to cyrcan:' he went off then home whole on his feet, he who before was borne on bier to church.

One of the least changed is the preposition *to*. This will mostly stand in an English translation out of Saxon: 'And se halga him cwæp to, þonne þu cymst to Winceastre,' and the saint said to him, when thou comest to Winchester; 'Se mann wearð þa gebroht to his bedde,' the man was then brought to his bed.

38. *With* in Saxon meant *against*, and we have still a relic of that sense in our compound verb *WITHSTAND*, which means to stand against, to oppose. We have all but lost

the old preposition which stood where the ordinary WITH now stands. It was *min*, and it still keeps its old place in the German *mit*. We have not utterly lost the last vestiges of it, for it does reappear now and then in poetry in a sort of disguise, as if it were not its own old self, but a maimed form of a compound of itself, *amid*; and so it gets printed like this—'*mid*.

**An** is a word in Saxon and also in modern English, and it is the same identical word in the two languages. But in the former it represents the first numeral, which we now call *won* and write *ONE*; in the latter it is the indefinite article.

In these specimens it is seen that words which in their visible form remain unaltered, may yet have become greatly changed in regard to their place and office in the language.

39. Such were some of the features of the Saxon speech, as well as we can illustrate them by a reference to modern English. Speaking relatively to the times, it was not a rude language, but probably the most disciplined of all the vernaculars of western Europe, and certainly the most cultivated of all the dialects of the Gothic barbarians. Its grammar was regulated, its orthography mature and almost fixed. It was capable, not of poetry alone, but of eloquent prose also, and it was equal to the task of translating the Latin authors, which were the literary models of the day. The extant Anglo-Saxon books are but as a few scattered splinters of the old Anglo-Saxon literature. Even if we had no other proof of the fact, the capability to which the language had arrived would alone be sufficient to assure us that it must have been diligently and largely cultivated. To this pitch of development it had reached, first by inheriting the relics of the Romano-British civilisation, and afterwards by four centuries and a half of Christian culture under the presiding influence of Latin as the language of religion and of



higher education. Latin happily did not then what it has since done in many lands; it did not operate to exclude the native tongue and to cast it into the shade, but to the beneficent end of regulating, fostering, and developing it.

§ 5. *Effects of the Norman Conquest.*

40. Such was the state of our language when its insular security was disturbed by the Norman invasion. Great and speedy was the effect of the Conquest in ruining the ancient grammar, which rested almost entirely on literary culture. The leading men in the state having no interest in the vernacular, its cultivation fell immediately into neglect. The chief of the Saxon clergy deposed or removed, who should now keep up that supply of religious Saxon literature, of the copiousness of which we may judge even in our day by the considerable remains that have outlived hostility and neglect? Now that the Saxon landowners were dispossessed, who should patronise the Saxon bard, and welcome the man of song in the halls of mirth?

The shock of the Conquest gave a deathblow to Saxon literature. There is but one of the Chroniclers that goes on to any length after the Conquest; and one of them stops short exactly at A.D. 1066, as if that sad year had bereft his task of all further interest. We have Saxon poetry up to that date or very near to it, but we have none for some generations after it. The English language continued to be spoken by the masses who could speak no other; and here and there a secluded student continued to write in it. But its honours and emoluments were gone, and a gloomy period of depression lay before the Saxon language as before the Saxon people. It is not too much to say that the Norman Conquest entailed the dissolution of the old cultivated lan-

•

guage of the Saxons, the literary Englist. The inflection-system could not live through this trying period. Just as we accumulate superfluities about us in prosperity, but in adversity we get rid of them as encumbrances, and we like to travel light when we have only our own legs to carry us—just so it happened to the Englist language. For now all these sounding terminations that made so handsome a figure in Saxon courts—the -AN, the -UM, the -ERA and the -ENA, the -IGENNE and -IGENDUM,—all these, superfluous as bells on idle horses, were laid aside when the nation had lost its old political life and its pride of nationality, and had received leaders and teachers who spoke a foreign tongue.

41. Nor was' this the only effect of the introduction of a new language into the country. A vast change was made in the vocabulary. The Normans had learnt by their sojourn in France to speak French, and this foreign language they brought with them to England. Sometimes this language is spoken of as the Norman or Norman-French. In a well-known volume of lectures on the *Study of Words*, by the present Archbishop of Dublin, the relations between this intrusive 'Norman' and the native speech are given with much felicity of illustration. I have the pleasure of inserting the following passage here with the permission of the author :—

' We might almost reconstruct our history, so far as it turns upon the Norman Conquest, by an analysis of our present language, a mustering of its words in groups, and a close observation of the nature and character of those which the two races have severally contributed to it. Thus we should confidently conclude that the Norman was the ruling race, from the noticeable fact that all the words of dignity, state, honour, and pre-eminence, with one remarkable exception (to be adduced presently), descend to us

from them—*sovereign, sceptre, throne, realm, royalty, homage, prince, duke, count, (earl indeed is Scandinavian, though he must borrow his countess from the Norman,) chancellor, treasurer, palace, castle, hall, dome*, and a multitude more. At the same time the one remarkable exception of KING would make us, even did we know nothing of the actual facts, suspect that the chieftain of this ruling race came in not upon a new title, not as overthrowing a former dynasty, but claiming to be in the rightful line of its succession; that the true continuity of the nation had not, in fact any more than in word, been entirely broken, but survived, in due time to assert itself anew.

‘ And yet, while the statelier superstructure of the language, almost all articles of luxury, all having to do with the chase, with chivalry, with personal adornment, is Norman throughout; with the broad basis of the language, and therefore of the life, it is otherwise. The great features of nature, sun, moon, and stars, earth, water, and fire, all the prime social relations, father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter,—these are Saxon. *Palace* and *castle* may have reached us from the Norman, but to the Saxon we owe far dearer names, the *house*, the *roof*, the *home*, the *hearth*. His “board” too, and often probably it was no more, has a more hospitable sound than the “table” of his lord. His sturdy arms turn the soil; he is the *boor*, the *hind*, the *churl*; or if his Norman master has a name for him, it is one which on his lips becomes more and more a title of opprobrium and contempt, the “villain.” The instruments used in cultivating the earth, the *flail*, the *plough*, the *sickle*, the *spade*, are expressed in his language; so too the main products of the earth, as *wheat*, *rye*, *oats*, *bere*; and no less the names of domestic animals. Concerning these last it is curious to observe that the names of almost all animals, so long as they are alive, are thus Saxon, but when dressed and prepared for food become Norman—a fact indeed which we might have expected beforehand; for the Saxon hind had the charge and labour of tending and feeding them, but only that they might appear on the table of his Norman lord. Thus *ox*, *steer*, *cow*, are Saxon, but *beef* Norman; *calf* is Saxon, but *veal* Norman; *sheep* is Saxon, but *mutton* Norman;

so it is severally with *swine* and *pork*, *deer* and *venison*, *fowl* and *pullet*.

‘Putting all this together, with much more of the same kind, which has only been indicated here, we should certainly gather, that while there are manifest tokens preserved in our language of the Saxon having been for a season an inferior and even an oppressed race, the stable elements of Anglo-Saxon life, however overlaid for a while, had still made good their claim to be the solid groundwork of the after nation as of the after language; and to the justice of this conclusion all other historic records, and the present social condition of England, consent in bearing witness.’ — *Study of Words*, 12th ed., 1867, pp. 98–100.

43. This duplicate system of words in English was the result of a long period during which the country was in a bilingual condition. The language of the consumer was one, and that of the producer another. In the market the seller and the buyer must have spoken different languages, both languages being familiar in sound to either party: just as on the frontier of the English and Welsh in the present day large numbers of people have a practical acquaintance with both languages, while they can talk in one only. This it is which has brought down upon the Welsh the unjust imputation of saying *Dim Saesoneg* out of churlishness. They may understand the enquiry, and yet they may not possess English enough to make answer with. A similar frontier between English and French must have existed in the Norman period in every town and almost in every village of England. This lasted down to the middle of the fourteenth century, when the new mixed language broke forth and took the lead. During three centuries, the native language was cast into the shade by the foreign speech of the conquerors. All that time French was getting more and more widely known and spoken; and it never covered so wide an area in this island as it did at the moment when the native speech upreared her head again

to assert a permanent supremacy. As the waters of a river are often shallowest there where they cover the widest area, so the French language had then the feeblest hold in this country, when it was most widely cultivated and most generally affected.

§ 6. *The Literature of the Transition. First Period.*

43. The Saxon had never ceased to be the speech of the body of the people. The Conquest could not alter this fact. What the Conquest did was to destroy the cultivated English, which depended for its propagation upon literature and literary men. This once extinct, there was no central or standard language. The French language in some respects supplied the place of a standard language, as the medium of intercourse between persons in the best ranks of society. The native speech, bereft of its central standard, fell abroad again. It fell back into that divided condition, in which each speaker and each writer is guided by the dialect of his own locality, undisciplined by any central standard of propriety. Our language became dialectic. And hence it comes to pass that of the authors whose books are preserved from the year A.D. 1100 to 1350, no two of them are uniform in dialect; each speaks a tongue of its own. We can divide this large tract of time into two parts, corresponding vaguely to the culmination and decline of the French fashion. It must be understood here, and wherever figures are given to distinguish periods in the history of language, that it is intended for the convenience of writer and reader, for distinctness of arrangement, and as an aid to the memory, rather than as a rigid limit. For in such things the two bordering forms so shade off and blend into one another, that they are not to be rigidly outlined any more than the primary colours in the rainbow.

44. For convenience sake, we may divide the 'transition' into two parts, and add a third era for the infancy of the national language :—

TRANSITION.

Broken Saxon (Latin documentary period) from 1100 to 1250

Early English (French documentary period) . 1250 to 1350

First national English . . . . . 1350 to 1550

Of the first division of this period, the grand landmarks are the two poems of Layamon's *Brut*, and the *Ormulum*; the *Brut* representing the dialect of the south and west, and the *Ormulum* that of the east and north.

The *Brut* of Layamon, a work which embodies in a poetic form the legends of British history, and which exceeds 30,000 lines, was edited, with an English translation, by Sir Frederic Madden, in 1847. Besides discussions on the language and the date, which is assigned to 1205, the leading passages for beauty or importance are indicated in a way which gives the reader an immediate command of the contents of this voluminous work. Such a poem as this was not the work of any one year, or even of a few years. It must be regarded as the life-long hobby of Layamon the priest, who lived at Areley Kings, on the west bank of the Severn, opposite Stourport, and who there served the church, being the chaplain and inmate of 'the good knight' of the parish. His language runs back and claims a near relationship to that of the close of the latest Saxon Chronicle: and this connection rests not on local but rather on literary affinity.

45. For it is easier to describe Layamon by his literary than by his local affinities. He is the last writer who retains an echo of the literary Engisc. Though he wrote for popular use, yet the scholar is apparent; he had conned

the old native literature enough to give a tinge to his diction, and to preserve a little of the ancient grammar. In so far as his dialect is local, it is the native tongue of Wessex which the imported Anglian had so long overlaid. Among the more observable features of his language are the following:— Infinitives in *i*, *ie*, or *y*; the use of *v* for *f*; the use of *u* for *i* or *y* in such words as *dude*, did; *hudde*, hid; *hulle*, hill; *putte*, pit. What adds greatly to the philological interest of the *Brut* is this, that a later text is extant, 'a text which bears the evident stamp of Northern English. It has been printed parallel with the elder text. One of the most salient characters of the northern dialect was its avoidance of the old *sc* initial, which had become *sh*. The northern dialect in such cases wrote simply *s*. The northern form for *shall* was *sall*, as indeed it continues to be to the present day. So among the tribes of Israel at the time of the Judges, it was a peculiarity of the tongue of the Ephraimites that they could not frame to pronounce *sh*, but said Sibboleth instead of Shibboleth. This is so definite a feature of the northern dialect that it is worth while to collect some of the examples in which it makes the contrast of the two texts:—

| FIRST TEXT.                                 | SECOND TEXT.              |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Scaft, <i>sbaft</i>                         | Saft                      |
| Scarpe, <i>sharp</i>                        | Sarpe                     |
| Scæðe, <i>sbeaþ</i>                         | Seape                     |
| Scal, scalt, scullen, sculleð, <i>sball</i> | Sal, salt, sollen, solleþ |
| Sceldes, <i>sbielde</i>                     | Seldes                    |
| Sceort, <i>short</i>                        | Sort                      |
| Scuten, <i>they shot</i>                    | Soten                     |
| Sceren, scar; <i>shear, shore</i>           | Seren, sar                |
| Scean, <i>sbone</i>                         | Son                       |
| Scip, <i>ship</i>                           | Sip                       |
| Scame, <i>shame</i>                         | Same                      |
| Sculderen, <i>soulders</i>                  | Soldre                    |
| Scunede, <i>sbunned</i>                     | Sonede                    |

The wall of Severus, which was made against the Picts, is

called in the elder text *scid-wall*, that is, wall of separation, *Scheide-Wall*; and in the later or northern text it is *sid-wal*.

46. The first specimen is from the younger or northern text.

#### ORIGIN OF BILLINGSGATE.

Line 6046.

|                                    |                                            |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Nou ich þe habbe i-sed hou hit his | <i>Now have I said to thee how it</i>      |
| agon,                              | <i>happened,</i>                           |
| of Kairliun in Glommorgan.         | <i>touching Caerleon in Glamorgan.</i>     |
| Go we ȝet to Belyn,                | <i>Go we back again to Belyn,</i>          |
| to þan blisfolle kyinge.           | <i>to that blissful king.</i>              |
| þo he hadde imaked þes borh,       | <i>When he had made the burgh</i>          |
| and hit cleopede Kair-Uske:        | <i>and called it Caer-Usk:</i>             |
| þo þe borh was strong and hende;   | <i>When the burgh was strong and trim,</i> |
| þo gan he þanne wende,             | <i>then gan he wend thence</i>             |
| riht to Londene,                   | <i>right to London,</i>                    |
| þo borh he swiþe louede.           | <i>the burgh he greatly loved.</i>         |
| He bi-gan þer ane tur;             | <i>He began there a tower</i>              |
| þe strengeste of alle þan tune:    | <i>the strongest of all the town;</i>      |
| and mid mochele ginne,             | <i>and with much art</i>                   |
| a ȝet þar hunder makede.           | <i>a gate there-under made.</i>            |
| þo me hit cleopde                  | <i>Then men called it</i>                  |
| Belynesȝat.                        | <i>'Billingsgate.'</i>                     |
| Nou and euere more,                | <i>Now and evermore,</i>                   |
| þe name stondiþ þare.              | <i>the name standeth there.</i>            |
| Leuede Belyn þe king,              | <i>Lived Belyn the king</i>                |
| in allere blisse:                  | <i>in all bliss:</i>                       |
| and alle his leode                 | <i>and all his people</i>                  |
| lofde hine swiþe.                  | <i>loved him greatly.</i>                  |
| In his dajes was so mochel metē,   | <i>In his days was there so much meat,</i> |
| þat hit was onimete.               | <i>that it was without measure.</i>        |

47. In the second specimen, which is from the elder text, *th* has been substituted for *þ* and *ȝ*, to accommodate the unpractised reader.

..

#### THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

Line 28582.

|                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Tha nas ther na mare,          | <i>Then was there no more</i>    |
| i than fehte to laue,          | <i>in that fight left alive,</i> |
| of twa hundred thusend monnen, | <i>out of 200,000 men,</i>       |



tha ther leien to-hawen;  
 buten Arthur the king one,  
 and of his cnihtes twien.  
 Arthur wes forwunded  
 wunderliche swithe.  
 Ther to him com a cnaue,  
 the wes of his cunne;  
 he wes Cadores sune,  
 the eorles of Cornwaile.  
 Constantin hehte the cnaue;  
 he wes than kinge deore.  
 Arthur him lokede on,  
 ther he lai on folden,  
 and thas word seide,  
 mid sorhfulle heorte.  
 Constantin thu art wilcume,  
 thu weore Cadores sune;  
 ich the bitache here,  
 mine kineriche:  
 and wite mine Bruttes,  
 a to thines lifes:  
 and hald heom alle tha lazen,  
 tha habbeoth istonden a mine dazen:  
 and alle tha lazen gode,  
 tha bi Vtheres dazen stode.  
 And ich wulle uaren to Aualun,  
 to uairest alre maidene;  
 to Argante there quene,  
 aluen swithe sceone:  
 and heo scal mine wunden,  
 makien alle isunde,  
 al hal me makien,  
 mid haleweige drenchen.  
 And seothe ich cumen wulle,  
 to mine kineriche:  
 and wunien mid Brutten,  
 mid muchelere wunne.  
 Æfne than worden,  
 ther com of se wenden,  
 that wes an sceort bat lithen,  
 sceouen mid vthen:  
 and twa wimmen therinne,  
 wunderliche idihte:  
 and heo nomen Arthur anan,  
 and aneouste hine uereden,  
 and softe hine adun leiden,  
 and forth gunnen hine lithen.

Tha wes hit iwurthen,  
 that Merlin seide whilen;

*that there lay cut to pieces;  
 but Arthur the King only  
 and two of his knights.  
 Arthur was wounded  
 dangerously much.  
 There to him came a 'knaue'  
 who was of his kin;  
 he was son of Cador,  
 the earl of Cornwall.  
 Constantin bight the 'knaue';  
 to the king he was dear.  
 Arthur looked upon him,  
 where he lay on the ground,  
 and these words said,  
 with sorrowful heart.  
 Constantine thou art welcome,  
 thou wert Cador's son:  
 I here convey to thee,  
 my kingdom:  
 and guide thou my Britons  
 aye to thy life's cost:  
 and secure them all the laws,  
 that have stood in my days:  
 and all the laws so good,  
 that by Uther his days stood.  
 And I will fare to Avalon,  
 to the fairest of all maidens;  
 to Argante the queen,  
 elf exceeding shewn:  
 and she shall my wounds,  
 make all sound,  
 all whole me make,  
 with healing drinks.  
 And sitb return I will,  
 to my kingdom:  
 and dwell with Britons,  
 with mickle joy.  
 Even with these words,  
 there came from sea-ward wending,  
 that was a short boat sailing,  
 moving with the waves:  
 and two women therein,  
 of marvellous aspect:  
 and they took Arthur anon,  
 and straightway bore him off,  
 and softly down him laid,  
 and forth with him to sea they gan  
 to move away.*

*Then was it accomplished,  
 what Merlin said whilome;*

that weore unimete care,  
of Arthures forth-fare.

Bruttes ileueth ȝete,  
that he beo on liue,  
and wunnie in Aualun  
mid fairest alre aluen:  
and lokieth euer Bruttes ȝete,  
whan Arthur cume lithen.

*that there should be much curious care,  
when Artbur out of life should fare.*

*Britons yet believe,  
that he be alive,  
and dwelling in Avalon,  
with the fairest of all elves:  
still look the Britons for the day,  
of Artbur's coming o'er the sea.*

48. A third specimen shall be taken from near the close of this voluminous work, where the elder text only is preserved.

#### A BRITISH VIEW OF ATHELSTAN'S REIGN.

Line 31981.

þa tiden comen sone,  
to Cadwalader kinge  
into Brutaine,  
þer þar he wunede  
mid Alaine kinge,  
þe wes of his cunne.  
Me dude him to understonde  
of al pisse londe;  
hu Aðelstan her com liðen,  
ut of Sex-londen;  
and hu he al Angle-lond,  
sette on his agere hond;  
and hu he sette moting,  
& hu he sette husting;  
and hu he sette sciren,  
and makede frið of deoren;  
& hu he sette halimot,  
& hu he sette hundred;  
and þa nomen of þan tunen,  
on Sexisce runen:  
and Sexis he gan kennen,  
þa nomen of þan monnen:  
and al me him talde,  
þa tiden of pisse londe.  
Wa wes Cadwaladere,  
þat he wes on liue.

*The tidings came soon  
to Cadwalader king  
into Brittany,  
where he woned  
with Alan the king,  
who was of his kin.  
Men did him to understand  
all about this land;  
how Athelstan had here embarked,  
coming out of Saxon parts;  
and how he all England  
set on his own hand;  
and how he set mote-ting,  
and how he set bus-ting;  
and how he set shires,  
and made law for game;  
and how he set halimot,  
and how he set hundred;  
and the names of the 'touns'  
in Saxon runes!  
and in Saxish gan he ken,  
the names of [British] men:  
and so they told him all the tale,  
the tidings of this land!  
Wo was Cadwalader,  
that he was in life!*

49. The *Ormulum* may be proximately dated at A.D. 1215. This is a versified narrative of the Gospels, addressed by Ormin or (cortly) Orm to his brother Walter, and after his

own name called by the author 'Ormulum'; by which designation it is commonly known.

|                                   |                                           |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Icc þatt tiss Ennglish hafe sett  | <i>I that this English have set</i>       |
| Ennglisshe men to lare,           | <i>English men to lore,</i>               |
| Icc wass þær-þær I cristnedd wass | <i>I was there-where I christened was</i> |
| Orrmin bi name nemmedd.           | <i>Ormin by name named.</i>               |

|                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Þiss boc iss nemmedd Ormulum  | <i>This book is named Ormulum</i>   |
| Forþi þatt Orrm itt wroughte. | <i>For-þis that Orm it wrought.</i> |

This book was first edited by Dr. White, in 1852. As the *Brut* represents the western type of English, so this does the eastern.<sup>1</sup> In this poem we find for the first time the word 'English' in the mature form. Layamon has the forms *englisc*, *englis*, *ænglis*, *anglisce*; but Orm has *enngliss*, and still more frequently the fully developed form *enngliss*.

50. The excess of consonants with which this name is written is a constant feature of the *Ormulum*. The author was one of Nature's philologists, and a spelling-reformer. He carefully puts the double consonant after the short vowel. Had his orthography been generally adopted, we should have had in English not only the *mm* and *nn* with which German is studded, but many other double consonants which we do not now possess. How great a study Orm had made of this subject we are not left to gather from observation of his spelling, for he has emphatically pointed out the importance of it in the opening of his work.

#### HOW TO SPELL.

|                                    |                                              |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| And whase wilenn shall þiss boc    | <i>And whoso shall determine to copy</i>     |
| efft operr siþe writenn            | <i>this book, I beg him to write it</i>      |
| himm bidde icc þat he't write riht | <i>accurately as the book directeth; and</i> |
| swa summ þiss boc him tæcheþþ      | <i>that he look well that he write a</i>     |

<sup>1</sup> *A History of English Rhythms*, by Edwin Guest, Esq., M. A. (1838), vol. ii. pp. 209, 409.

and tatt he loke well þatt he  
 an bocstaff write twiggess  
 eggwhær þær itt uppo þiss boc  
 iss writen o þatt wise.  
 loke well þatt he't write swa,  
 for he ne magg nohht elless  
 on Ennglissh writenn rihht te word,  
 þatt wite he well to soþe.

*letter twice wherever in this book it is  
 so written. Let him look carefully  
 that he write it so, for else he can-  
 not write it correctly in English—of  
 that he may be assured !*

51. The double consonant in such a situation is common enough, and the only peculiarity here is in making a rule of it. But there is another point of orthography which is peculiar to this author. When words beginning with þ follow words ending in *d* or *t*, he generally (with but a few, and those definite exceptions) alters the initial þ to *t*. Where (for example) he has the three words *þatt* and *þatt* and *þe* succeeding one another continuously, he writes, not *þatt þatt þe*, but *þatt tatt te*. One important exception to this rule is where the word ending with the *d* or *t* is severed from the word beginning with þ by a metrical pause ; in that case the change does not take place, as—

ȝ agg after þe Goddspell stannt  
 þatt tatt de Goddspell meneþþ.

*and aye after the Gospel standeth  
 that which the Gospel meaneth.*

Here the *stannt* does not change the initial of the next word, because of the metrical division that separates them. Other examples of these peculiarities may be seen in the following extract.

#### CHARACTER OF A GOOD MONK.

Forr himm birrþ beon full clene mann,  
 and all wiþputenn aghhte,  
 Buttan þatt mann himm findenn shall  
 unnoꝛne mete and wæde.  
 And tær iss all þatt eoꝛþlig þing  
 þatt minnstremann birrþ aghenn  
 Wiþputenn cnif and shæpe and camb  
 and nedle, giff he't georneþþ.  
 And all þiss shall mann findenn himm  
 and wel himm birrþ itt gemeenn ;

For birrþ himm nowwþerr don þæroff,  
 ne gifenn itt ne sellenn.  
 And himm birrþ æfre standenn inn  
 to lofenn Godd and wurþen,  
 And agg himm birrþ beon fressh þærto  
 bi daggess and by nihhtess;  
 And tat iss harrd and strang and tor  
 and hefig lif to ledenn,  
 And forþi birrþ wel clawwstremann  
 onnfangenn mikell mede,  
 Att hiss Drihhtin Allwældennd Godd,  
 forr whamm he mikell swinnkeþþ.  
 And all hiss herrte and all hiss lusst  
 birrþ agg beon towardd heoffne,  
 And himm birrþ geornenn agg þatt an  
 hiss Drihhtin wel to cwemenn,  
 Wiþþ daggsang and wiþþ uhhtennsang  
 wiþþ messess and wiþþ beness, &c.

## TRANSLATION.

*For he ought to be a very pure man  
 and altogether without property,  
 Except that he shall be found in  
 simple meat and clothes.  
 And that is all the earthly thing  
 that minster-man should own,  
 Except a knife and sheath and comb  
 and needle, if he want it.  
 And all this shall they find for him  
 and his duty is to take care of it,  
 For he may neither do with it,  
 neither give it nor sell.  
 And he must ever stand in (vigorously)  
 to praise and worship God,  
 And aye must he be fresh thereto  
 by daytime and by nights;  
 And that's a hard and stiff and rough  
 and heavy life to lead,  
 And therefore well may cloister'd man  
 receive a mickle meed  
 At the hand of his Lord Allwielding God,  
 for whom he mickle slaveth.  
 And all his heart and his desire  
 ought aye be toward heaven,  
 And he should yearn for that alone,  
 his Master well to serve,  
 With day-time chant and chant at prime,  
 with masses and with prayers, &c.*

The poems of Layamon and Ormin may be regarded as appertaining to the old Saxon literature. Layamon and Ormin both cling to the old in different ways: Layamon in his poetic form, Ormin in his grammar. Both also bear traces, in different ways, of the earlier processes of that great change which the French was working in the English language. The long story of the *Brut* is told in lines which affect the ancient style; but the style is chaotic, and abounds in accidental decorations, like a thing constructed out of ruins. In the *Ormulum* the regularity is perfect, but it is the regularity of the new style of versification, learnt from foreign teachers. The iambic measure sits admirably on the ancient diction: for Ormin, new as he is in his metre, is old in his grammar and vocabulary. The works differ as the men differed: the one, a secular priest, has the country taste for an irregular poetry with alliteration and every other reverberatory charm; the other, a true monk, carries his regularity into everything—arrangement, metre, orthography. He looks like a sturdy Saxon, but with the education of a monastery that has already been ruled by a succession of French abbots.

From these two authors, as from some half-severed promontory, we look across the water studded with islands, to where the continent of the modern English language rears its abrupt front in the writings of Chaucer.

### § 7. *The triumph of French.*

52. In the two great works which have occupied us during the preceding pages, the Englisc has made its latest stand against the growing ascendancy of the French. These books stand on ground of their own as contrasted with

the writings of the next period. We now approach the time when for a century and a half French held a recognised position as the language of education, of society, of business, and of administration. Long before 1250 we get traces of the documentary use of French, and long after 1350 it was continued. Trevisa says it was a new thing in 1385 for children to construe into English in the grammar schools, where they had been used to do their construing into French. If we ask what manner of French it was, we must point to that now spoken by the peasants of Normandy, and perhaps still more to the French dialect which has been preserved in the Channel Islands. A bold trace of this use of French as the language of public business in this country still survives in the formula *LE ROI LE VEULT* or *LA REINE LE VEULT*, by which the royal assent to bills is announced in Parliament. In the utterance of this puissant sentence it is considered correct to groll the *r* after the manner of the peasants of Normandy.

One particular class of words shall be noticed in this place as the result of the French rule in England. This is a group of words which will serve to depict the times that stamped them on our speech. They are the utterance of the violent and selfish passions.

**53.** Almost all the sinister and ill-favoured words which were in the English language at the time of Shakspeare, owed their origin to this unhappy era. The malignant passions were let loose, as if without control of reason or of religion; men hotly pursued after the objects of their ambition, covetousness, or other passions, till they grew insensible to every feeling of tenderness and humanity; they regarded one another in no other light but as obstructives or auxiliaries in their own path. What wonder that such a state of society furnished little or nothing for expressing the delicate emotions,

while it supplied the nascent English with such a mass of opprobrious epithets as to have lasted, with few occasional additions, till the present day. Of these words a few may be cited by way of example. And first I will instance the word *juggler*. This word has two senses. It is, first, a person who makes a livelihood by amusing tricks. Secondly, it has the moral sense of an impostor or deceiver. The latter is the prevalent modern use. Both these senses date from the French period of our history.

To *jape* is to jest coarsely; a *japer* is a low buffoon; *japery* is buffoonery; and *jape-worthy* is ignominiously ridiculous.

To *jangle* is to prate or babble; a *jangler* is a man-prater, and a *jangleress* is a woman-prater.

‘Bote Iapers and Ianglers. Iudasses children.’

*Piers Plowman's Vision*, 35.

54. *Raven* is plunder; *raveners* are plunderers; and although this family of words is extinct, with the single exception of *ravenous* as applied to a beast of prey, yet they are still generally known from the Authorised Version, and they must have been current English in 1611.

*Ribald* and *ribaldry* are of the progeny of this prolific period. *Ribald* was almost a class-name in the feudal system. One of the ways, and almost the only way, in which a man of low birth who had no inclination to the religious life of the monastery could rise into some sort of importance and consideration, was by entering the service of a powerful baron. He lived in coarse abundance at the castle of his patron, and was ready to perform any service of whatever nature. He was a rollicking sort of a bravo or swash-buckler. He was his patron's parasite, bull-dog and tool. Such was the *ribald*, and it is not to be wondered at that



the word rapidly became a synonym for everything ruffianly and brutal; and having passed into an epithet, went to swell the already overgrown list of vituperations.

Such are a few of the words with which our language was endowed, in its first rude contact with the French language. Though we find nearer our own times, namely, in the reign of Charles the Second, some accordance of tone with the early feudal period, yet neither in that nor in any other age was there produced such a strain of injurious words, calculated for nothing else but to enable a man to fling indignities at his fellow.

The same period is stigmatised by another bad characteristic, and that is, the facility with which it disparaged good and respectable words.

55. *Villan* was simply a class-name, by which a humble order of men was designated; *ceorl* was a Saxon name of like import: both of these became disparaged at the time we speak of into the injurious sense of *villain* and *churl*.

The adjective *imaginatif* was then in use, but it had not the worthy sense of *imaginative*, richly endowed with ideas—it meant simply *suspicious*.

The furious and violent life of that period had every need of relief and relaxation. This was found in the abandonment of revelry and in the counter-stimulant of the gaming-table. The very word *revelry*, with its cognates *to revel*, *revelling*, *revellers*, are productions of this period. The rage for gambling which distinguished the habits of our Norman-French rulers is aptly commemorated in the fact that up to the present day the English terms for games of chance are of French extraction. *Dice* were seen in every hall, and were then called by the same name as now. *Cards*, though a later invention, namely, of the thirteenth or beginning

of the fourteenth century, are still appropriately designated by a French name.

56. The fashion of counting by *ace, deuce, trey, quart, cink, siz,* &c., is French—not modern French, but of the feudal age. We find it in Chaucer, precisely as at present :—

‘Seven is my chance, and thin is cink and treye.’

*Canterbury Tales*, 12,587.

*Chance* itself is one of those gaming terms, and so is *hazard*, which was the prominent word in the phraseology of gambling, and accordingly very odious to the moralist of that day. In the list of vices *hasardery* comes in next to *gluttony*, as being that which beset men next after the temptations of the table.

‘And now that I have spoken of glotonie,  
Now wol I you defenden hasardrie.  
Hasard is veray moder of lesinges,  
And of deceite, and cursed forsweringes.  
It is repreve, and contrary of honour,  
For to ben hold a common hasardour.’

*Canterbury Tales*, 12,522.

It is a comfort to observe that even a word may outlive a bad reputation. The word *hazard*, though still a gambling term in the last century, has now little association with disorderly excitement and the thirst for sudden wealth; it suggests to our minds some laudable adventure, or elevates the thought to some of those exalted aims for which men have *hazarded* their lives. Another word may be cited, which belonged originally to the same ill-conditioned strain, but which time has purified and converted into a picturesque word, no longer a disgrace but an ornament to the language. This is *jeopardy*, at first a mere excited and interjectional cry, *Jeu perdu!* game lost! or else, *jeu parti!* drawn game!—but now a wholesome rhetorical word.

It would hardly be fair however to omit mention of the fact that other classes of words were also gained at this period. Some theological and moral terms of the first necessity, such as *charity, faith, grace, mercy, peace*, belong here; and so also a variety of commercial, legal, heraldic, and political words, as *advocate, alliance, arrearage, chattels, custom, demise, devise, domain, fief, fealty, homage, liege, loyalty, manor, meynie, moiety, personalty, pursuit, pursuivant, realty, rent, seisin, serjeant, sovereign, treaty, trover, vouchsafe*.

§ 8. *Literature of the Transition. Second Period.*

57. In this period, which may be rudely defined by the dates 1250–1350, we see strong efforts after a native literature; but as yet they have no centre of their own—they hang aloof as it were, and hover provincially around the privileged and authoritative languages of French and Latin. They have not among themselves a common or even a leading form of speech. This period has been abundantly illustrated by the labours of the Early English Text Society.

The first example of the new group is the beautiful poem of *Genesis and Exodus*. Here the word *shall* is thus declined: sing. *sal, salt*; pl. *sulen*. Also *srud* for the Saxon *scrud*, modern *shroud*; and *suuen* as a participle of the verb which we now write *shove*. This speaks for its Anglian character. The date is about A.D. 1250. As a specimen of the language, we may quote the selling of Joseph:—

Ʒe chapmen skiuden here fare,  
in to Egipte led den Ʒat ware;  
wiƷ Putifar Ʒe kinges stiward,  
he maden wiƷe bigetel forward;  
so michel fe Ʒor is hem told;  
he hauen him bogt, he hauen sold.

*The chapmen hastened their departure,  
into Egypt led the ware;  
with Potiphar the king's steward,  
they made very profitable bargain;  
so much money there is them told;  
these have bought him, and those  
have sold.*

The form *he* represents the Saxon *hi*, and is equivalent to

our modern pronoun *they*. The *-n* form of the present tense in *hauen* is a token of midland locality.

Worth quoting also is the butler's narrative of his dream to Joseph in the prison :—

Me drempte ic stod at a win-tre,  
 ðat adde waxen buges ðre.  
 Orest it blomede and siðen bar  
 ðe berries ripe, wurð ic war:  
 ðe kinges kuppe ic hadde on hond,  
 ðe berries ðor-inne me ðhugte ic  
     wrong,  
 and bar it drinken to Pharaon,  
 me drempte, als ic was wune to don.

*I dreamt I stood at a vine-tree  
 that had waxen boughs thre.  
 Erst it bloomed and then it bare  
 the berries ripe, as I was ware:  
 the king's cup I had in hand,  
 the berries therein me-thought I  
     wrong,  
 And bare it to drink to Pharaon  
 (I dreamed) as I was wont to do.*

At the end of his version of Genesis, the poet speaks of himself and of his work :—

God schilde hise sowle fro helle bale  
 ðe made it ðus on Engel tale!

*God shield his soul from hell-bale  
 that made it thus in English tale!*

58. The most facetious of the productions of this period is the poem entitled *The Owl and the Nightingale*. Its locality is established by internal evidence, as having been written at or near Portesham in Dorsetshire. It is a singular combination of archaic English with ripe wit and mature versification. The forms of words and even the turns of expression recall Mr. Barnes's *Poems in the Dorset Dialect*. A prominent feature is the frequent use of *v* where we write *f*, as *vo* for foe; *vlize* flies; *vairer* fairer; *vram* from; *vor* for; but *so far-vorþ* for 'so far forth'; *ware-vore* wherefore. The old *sc* becomes *\*sch*, as *schaltu*, *schule*, *scholde*, *schonde*, *schame*, *schakeð*, *schende*, *schuniel* shunneth, *scharp*.

The subject is a bitter altercation between the Owl and the Nightingale; such as might naturally be supposed to arise out of the neighbourhood of two creatures not only

unlike in their tastes and habits, but unequally endowed with gifts and accomplishments. The following picture of the Owl's attitude as she listens to the Nightingale's song, will afford some taste of the humour as well as of the diction :—

þos word aʒaf þe niʒtingale,  
And after þare longe tale,  
He songe so lude and so scharpe,  
Riʒt so me grulde schille harpe.  
þes hule luste þider-ward,  
And hold hire eʒen oþer-ward,  
And sat to-suolle and i-bolʒe,  
Also ho hadde on frogge i-suolʒe.

*These words returned the nightingale,  
And after that there long tale,  
He sang so loud and so sharp,  
As if one trilled a silly harp.  
This owl she listened thitherward,  
And held her eyen otherward;  
And sat all swollen and out-blown  
As if she had swallowed a frog.*

This poem is one of the most genuine and original idylls of any age or of any language, and the Englishman who wants an inducement to master the dialects of the thirteenth century, may assure himself of a pleasure when he is able to appreciate this exquisite pastoral. Its date may be somewhere about A.D. 1280.

59. The student of English will observe with particular interest the series of translations from the French romances which began in the thirteenth century. This was a courtly literature, which was originally written in the courtly speech; and the copious translation of this literature is the first sign of a reaction at court in favour of the native language. Of these we will first mention *The Lay of Havelok the Dane*, which is in a midland dialect, but almost as free from strong provincial marks as it is from French words. It uses the *sh*, as will be seen from the following quotation, in which it is related how Grimsby was founded by Grim :—

In Humber Grim bigan to lende,  
In Lindeseye, rith at the north ende,  
Ther sat is ship up on the sond,  
But Grim it drou up to the lond.

And there he made a lite cote,  
 To him and to hise flote.  
 Bigan he there for to erthe<sup>1</sup>  
 A litel hus to maken of erthe.  
 And for that Grim that place aute,<sup>2</sup>  
 The stede of Grim the name laute,<sup>3</sup>  
 So that Grimesbi calleth alle  
 That ther-offe spoken alle,  
 And so shulen men callen it ay,  
 Bituene this and domesday.

As this poem is associated with Lincolnshire, we might expect to find many Danish words in it. But the number of those that can be clearly distinguished as such, is small. It can hardly be doubted that the Danish population which occupied so much of the Anglian districts must have considerably modified our language. Their influence would probably have been greater, but for the cruel harrying of the North by William the Conqueror. The affinity of the Danish with the Anglian would make it easy for the languages to blend, and the same cause renders it difficult for us to distinguish the Danish contributions. Of words that are of great mark in the language, a probable Danish word is *hap*, from which we have formed *happy*, *happily*, *haphazard*, *happiness*. It is deeply bedded in the Icelandic language; only there is this untoward fact, that it seems equally rooted in the Welsh.

60. In the *Romance of King Alexander*, another translation from the French, we begin to hear a sound as of the coming English language. Most of the transition pieces are widely distinct from the diction of Gower and Chaucer, but this has the air of a preparation for those writers. This romance sometimes resembles not distantly the *Romaunt of the Rose*. The feature which most claims attention is the working in of French words with the English.

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<sup>1</sup> to dwell.

<sup>2</sup> owned.

<sup>3</sup> took.

This poem was the general favourite before the Romaunt of the Rose superseded it. The French romance of Alexander was composed about the year 1200. It consists of 20,000 long twelve-syllable lines, a measure which thenceforward became famous in literature, and took the name of 'Alexandrine,' after this romance. The English version was made late in the thirteenth century, in a lax tetrameter. It was not till Spenser that the Alexandrine metre obtained an acknowledged place in English poetry.

Unlike the poem of *Havelok*, a great proportion of the French words of the original are embodied in this English version. The two languages do not yet appear blended together, but only mixed bilingually. The following lines will illustrate this crude mixture of French with English :—

1. That us telleth the *maistres saunz faile*.
2. Hy ne ben no more *verreymet*.
3. And to have horses *auenaunt*,  
To hem stalworth and *asperaunt*.
4. Toppe and rugge, and croupe and *cors*  
Is *semblabel* to an hors.

61. Now we come to an important and original work. In the rhyming Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester we have a fine specimen of west-country English, which touches the dialect of *The Owl and Nightingale* at many points :—the infinitives ending in *-i* or *-y*, or *-ie*, as to *conseili* to counsel ; *he wolde susteini*, he would sustain ; 'he ne let noȝt *clupie* al is folc,' he let not call all his folk ; 'duc William uorbed alle his to *robby*,' duke William forbad all his men to rob ; *hoseli*, to housel ; 'pis noble duc Willam him let *crouny* king,' this noble duke William made them crown him king.

In many cases this dialect differs strongly from the Dorset, as exhibited in the *Owl and Nightingale*. The latter has the

initial *h* very constant in such words as *Ich habbe* I have; *þu havest* thou hast; *ho hadde* she had; whereas in Robert of Gloucester it is *adde*. He writes *is* for *his*, *ire* for *hire* her, *om* for *home*. The Dorset, on the other hand, retains the *h* in *hit* it; writes the *owl* down as a 'hule,' and a 'houle'; never fails in *sh*, but rather strengthens it by the spelling *sch*, as *scharpe*, *schild*, *schal*, *schame*; whereas the Gloucester dialect eludes the *h* in such instances, and writes *ss*, as *ssolde* should; *ssipes* ships; *ssriue* shrive; *ssire* shire; *bissopes* bishops; and even *Engliss* English; *Frenss* French.

62. The following line offers a good illustration both of this feature, and also of the metre of this Chronicle, which is not very equable or regular, but of which the ideal seems to be the fourteen-syllable ballad-metre:—

'Hou longe ssolle hor luper heued above hor ssoldren be?'

How long-a shall their hated heads  
Above their shoulders be?

Perhaps this *ss* may have been a difference of orthography rather than of pronunciation. Which is made probable by the substitution of the *ss* for *ch* where we must suppose a French pronunciation of the *ch*, which is about the same as our *sh* sound. Thus, in the long piece presently to be quoted, we have Michaelmas written *Misselmasse*.

*The Commencement of Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle,  
as printed by Hearne. Date about 1300.*

Engelond ys a wel god lond, ich wene of eche lond best,  
Yset in the ende of the world, as al in the West.  
The see goth hym al a boutte, he stont as an yle.  
Here fon heo durre the lasse doute, but hit be thorw gyle  
Of folc of the selue lond, as me hath yseye wyle.  
From South to North he is long eighte hondred myle;  
And foure hondred myle brod from Est to West to wende,  
Amydde tho lond as yt be, and nougt as by the on ende.



Plente me may in Engeland of all gods yse,  
 Bute folc yt forgulte other yeres the worse be.  
 For Engeland ys ful ynow of fruyt and of tren,  
 Of wodes and of parkes, that joye yt ys to sen;  
 Of foules and of bestes, of wyld and tame al so;  
 Of salt fisch and eche fresch, and fayre ryueres ther to;  
 Of welles swete and colde ynow, of lesen and of mede;  
 Of seluer or and of gold, of tyn and of lede;  
 Of stel, of yrn, and of bras; of god corn gret won;  
 Of whyte and of wolle god, betere ne may be non.

*England is a very good land, I ween of every land (the) best; set in the end of the world, as in the utter west. The sea goeth it all about; it standeth as an isle. Their foes they need the less fear, except it be through guile of folk of the same land, as men have seen sometimes. From south to north it is eight hundred mile long; and four hundred mile broad to wend from east to west, that is, amid the land, and not as by the one end. Plenty of all goods men may in England see, unless the people are in fault or the years are bad. For England is full enough of fruit and of trees: of woods and of parks, that joy it is to see; of fowls and of beasts, of wild and tame also; of salt fish and eke fresh, and fair rivers thereto; of wells sweet and cold enow, of pastures and of meads; of silver ore and of gold, of tin and of lead; of steel, of iron, and of brass; of good corn great store; of wheat and of good wool, better may be none.*

63. The most famous and ofttest quoted piece of Robert of Gloucester is that wherein he sums up the consequences of the Battle of Hastings. It contains the clearest and best statement of the bilingual state of the population in his own time, that is, before A.D. 1300.

Bituene Misselmasse and Sein Luc, a Sein Calixtes day,  
 As vel in þulke 3ere in a Saterdag,  
 In þe 3er of grace, as it vel also,  
 A þousend and sixe 7 sixti, þis bataile was ido.  
 Duc Willam was þo old nyne 7 þritti 3er,  
 7 on 7 þritti 3er he was of Normandie duc er.  
 Þo þis bataile was ydo, duc Willam let bringe  
 Vaire his folc, that was aslawe, an erþe þoru alle þinge.  
 Alle þat wolde leue he 3ef, þat is fon anerþe bro3te.  
 Haraldes moder uor hire sone wel 3erne him biso3te  
 Bi messagers, 7 largeliche him bed of ire þinge,  
 To granti hire hire sones bodi anerþe vor to bringe.  
 Willam hit sende hire vaire inou, wiþoute eny þing þare ugre:  
 So þat it was þoru hire hire wiþ gret honour ybore  
 To þe hous of Waltham, 7 ibro3t anerþe þere,  
 In þe holi rode chirche, þat he let him-sulf rere,  
 An hous of religion, of canons ywis.

Hit was þer vaire an erþeibroȝt, as it ȝut is.  
 Willam þis noble duc, þo he adde ido al þis,  
 Þen wey he nom to Londone, he ȝ alle his,  
 As king and prince of londe, wiþ nobleȝe ynou.  
 Aȝen him wiþ uair procession þat folc of ȝoune drou,  
 ȝ vnderueng him vaire inou, as king of þis lond.  
 Þus com lo Engeland, in to Normandies hond.  
 ȝ þe Normans ne couþe speke þo, bote hor owe speche,  
 ȝ speke French as hii dude at om ȝ hor children dude also teche.  
 So þat heimen of þis lond, þat of hor blod come,  
 Holdeþ alle þulke speche that hii of homi nome.  
 Vor bote a man conne Frenss, me telþ of him lute,  
 Ac lowe men holdeþ to Engliss ȝ to hor owe speche ȝute.  
 Ich wene þer ne beþ in al þe world contreyes none,  
 Þat ne holdeþ to hor owe speche bote Englund one.  
 Ac wel me wot uor to conne boþe well it is,  
 Vor þe more þat a man can, the more wurþe he is.

It will hardly be necessary to translate the whole of this passage for the reader. We will modernise a specimen to serve as a guide to the rest. The last ten lines shall be selected as recording the linguistic condition of the country.

*And the Normans could not then speak any speech but their own; and they spoke French as they did at home, and had their children taught the same. So that the high men of this land, that came of their blood, all retain the same speech which they brought from their home. For unless a man know French, people regard him little: but the low men bold to English, and to their own speech still. I ween there be no countries in all the world that do not bold to their own speech, except England only. But undoubtedly it is well to know both; for the more a man knows, the more worth he is.*

64. These examples will perhaps suffice to give an idea of the dissevered and dialectic condition of the native language from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. During this long interval the reigning language was French, and this fashion, like all fashions, went on spreading and embracing a wider area, and ever growing thinner as it spread, till in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was become an acknowledged subject of derision. Already, before 1200, the famous Abbot Sampson, of Bury St. Edmunds, was thought to have said a good and memorable thing when he gave as his

reason for preferring one man to a farm rather than another, that his man could not speak French. The French which was spoken in this country had acquired an insular character; it was full of Anglicisms and English words, and in fact must often have been little more than deformed English. Even well-educated persons, such as Chaucer's gentle and lady-like Prioress, spoke a French which, as the poet informs us, was utterly unlike 'French of Paris.' What then must have been the French of the homely upland fellows Trevisa tells of:—'and oplondysch men wol lykne hamsylf to gentil men, and fondeþ with great bysynes for to speke Freynsch, for to be more ytold of'?

65. In *Piers Plowman* we have the dykers and delvers with their bits of French, doing a very bad day's work, but eminently polite to the ladies of the family:—

'Dykers and Delvers that don here werk ille,  
And driveth forth the longe day, with "Deu vous saue, dam Emme."'

*Piers Plowman's Prologue*, 103.

Perhaps it is a song they sing, as the latest editor, Mr. Skeat, takes it. This will serve equally well or even better to illustrate the complete diffusion of the French language among all ranks; and we might imagine, that now for the second time in history it was on a turn of the balance whether Britain should produce nationality of the Romanesque or of the Gothic type. But in the meantime the native tongue was growing more and more in use and respect, and at length, in the middle of the fourteenth century, we reach the end of its suppression and obscurity. Trevisa fixes on the great plague of 1349 as an epoch after which a change was observable in regard to the popular rage for speaking French. He says: 'This was moche used tofore the grete deth, but sith it is somdele chaunged.' But the most important date is 1362,

when the English language was re-installed in its natural rights, and was established as the language of the Courts of Law.

66. In the review of specimens of English which have passed before us, we are struck with their diversity and the absence of any signs of convergency to a common type. The only feature which they agree in with a sort of growing consent, is in the dropping of the old inflections and the severance of connection with the old Anglo-Saxon accidence. Among the most tenacious of these inflections was the genitive plural of substantives in *-ena* (Anglo-Saxon), and of adjectives in *-ra*. This *-ena* drooped into the more languid *-ene*; and the *-ra* appeared as *-er* or *-r*, as in *their*, *aller*, *alderliefest*.

Throughout the whole of this period there is such a tendency to variety and dialectic subdivision, that it has been found hard to say how many dialects there were in the country. Higden, writing in the fourteenth century, said there were three, the Northern, the Southern, and the Midland. This division is substantial and useful, and we may find the tokens of these in three well-marked forms of the present tense indicative. The *-n* of the Midland dialect may be seen at 57. This form is restricted and comparatively obscure. The *-eth* is Southern, the *-es* Northern (86). The *-eth* was universal in Saxon literature, the *-es* is universal now. The turning-point is seen in Shakspeare, who uses them both according to convenience, though the *-es* is usual with him, except in the case of *hath* and *doth*. The triumph of the Northern dialect in this particular has contributed much to English sibilation.

We have said enough of dialects. The task of this manual is rather to point the way to each branch of the subject, than to offer an exhaustive treatment of any. The dialects may be dismissed with the remark, that they offer

peculiar advantages for philological discipline. In the first place, they are an entertaining study. There is a charm about them which makes itself generally felt, and which often turns even the indifferent into an observer;—besides the additional recommendation, that they are to be sought chiefly in the pleasantest places of the land. And secondly, their fragmentary condition, which to the grammatical view discredits them, is so far from being a drawback, that it is a circumstance highly favourable to the formation of a philological habit of mind. It is the organic completeness of a language that recommends it for grammatical study, but the philological interest is totally different. In every language, however perfect, philology sees a mass of relics, which can be mentally completed and satisfactorily understood only by reference to other languages. It is not easy at first to see the most perfect languages in this light; nor is it by any means desirable that the student should do so, until after the time that by grammatical study he has comprehended somewhat of their perfections. But when we regard our homely dialects, the dilapidation is patent, and the most wholesome thought is of reconstruction by sounder specimens; and in this thought lies the germ of the philological idea.

### § 9. *The King's English.*

67. We have a phenomenon to account for. In the midst of this Babel of dialects there suddenly appeared a standard English language. It appeared at once in full vigour, and was acknowledged on all hands without dispute. The study of the previous age does not make us acquainted with a general process of convergency towards this result, but rather indicates that each locality was getting confirmed in its own peculiar habits of speech, and that the divergence was

growing wider. Now there appeared a mature form of English which was generally received.

The two writers of the fourteenth century who most powerfully display this language are Chaucer and Gower. *Piers Plowman* is in a dialect; Wiclif's Bible Version is in a dialect: but Chaucer and Gower write in a speech which is thenceforward recognised as THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, and which before their time is hardly found. This seems to admit of but one explanation. It must have been simply the language that had formed itself in the court about the person of the monarch. Chaucer and Gower differ from the other chief writers of their time in this particular, which they have in common between themselves, that they were both conversant with court life, and moved in the highest regions of English society. They wrote in fact *King's English*. This advantage, joined to the excellence of the works themselves, procured for these two writers, but more especially for Chaucer, the preference over all that had written in English.

68. An admiring foreigner (I think it was M. Montalembert), among other compliments to the virtues of this nation, observed, as a proof of our loyalty and our attachment to the monarchy, that we even call our roads 'the Queen's Highways,' and our language 'the Queen's English'! No Englishman would wish to dim the beauty of the sentiment here attributed to us, nor need we think it is disparaged though a matter-of-fact origin can be assigned to each of these expressions. Of the term 'King's Highway' the origin is historically known. When there were many jurisdictions in this country, which were practically independent of the crown, the tracts in which jurisdiction might be uncertain, such as the border-lands of the shires and the highways, appertained to the royal jurisdiction. That is to say, a crime committed on the highway was as if committed in the

King's own personal domain, and fell to his courts to judge. The highways were emphatically under the King's Peace, and hence they came to be (for a very solid and substantial reason, at a time when travellers sorely needed to have their security guaranteed) spoken of as the 'King's Highways.' Of the origin of the term 'King's English' we have not any direct testimony of this kind; but it seems that it may be constructively shewn, at least as a probability, that it was originally the term to designate the style of the royal or governmental proclamations, charters, and other legal writings, by contrast with the various dialects of the provinces.

As a little collateral illustration and confirmation of this view, it may not be amiss to observe that the style of penmanship in which such documents were then written has always been known as 'Court Hand.'

69. From about the middle of the thirteenth century, it had become usual to employ French in the most select documents, instead of Latin, which had been the documentary language from the time of the Conquest. Hallam tells us, on the authority of Mr. Stevenson, that 'all letters, even of a private nature, were written in Latin till the beginning of the reign of Edward I (soon after 1270), when a sudden change brought in the use of French.' But neither of these strange languages were suitable for edicts and proclamations addressed to the body of the people, and we may suppose that the vernacular was generally employed for this purpose, although few examples have survived. The earliest extant piece of this class is of the reign of Henry III, at the moment of the triumph of the barons, and Mr. Blaauw interprets the employment of the English language at this crisis as proving 'the anxiety of the barons to explain their conduct to the people at large, by the use of the best medium of information.'

*Proclamation of Henry III, sent to the several Counties  
of England, October 18, 1258.<sup>1</sup>*

¶ Henr', þurȝ Godes fultume, King on Engleneloande, Lhoauerd on Yrloand, Duk on Norm' on Aquitain' and eorl on Aniow, send igreteinge to alle hise holde, ilærde and ilæwede on Huntendon' schir'.

þæt witen ȝe wel alle þæt we willen and unnen þæt. þæt vre rædesmen alle oþer þe moare dæl of heom, þæt beoþ ichosen þurȝ us and þurȝ þæt loandes folk on vre kuneriche. habbeþ idon and schulle don. in þe worþnesse of Gode and on vre treowþe, for þe fremed of þe loande þurȝ þe besigte of þan toforen iseide redesmen. beo stedefæst and ilestinde in alle þinge abuten ænde.

And we hoaten alle vre treowe, in þe treowþe þæt heo vs oȝen. þæt heo stedefæstliche healden and swerien to healden and to werien þe isetnesses þæt beon imakede and beon to makien, þurȝ þan to foren iseide rædesmen oþer þurȝ þe moare dæl of heom, alswo also hit is biforen iseid.

And þæt æhc oþer helpe þæt for to done, bi þan ilche oþe aȝenes alle men. Riȝt for to done and to foangen. And noan ne nime of loande ne of eȝte. wherþurȝ þis besigte muȝe beon ilet oþer iwersed on onie wise. And ȝif on i oþer onie cumen her onȝenes, we willen and hoaten þæt alle vre treowe heom healden deadliche ifoan.

And for þæt we willen þæt þis beo stedefæst and lestinde. we senden ȝew þis writ open, iseined wiþ vre seel. to halden a manges ȝew ine hord. Witnesse vs seluen æt Lunden', þane eȝtetenþe day. on þe monþe of Octobr' in þe two and fowertizþe ȝeare of vre cruninge.

And þis wes idon ætforen vre isworene redesmen, Bonefac' Archebischop on Kant'bur'. Walt' of Cantelow. Bischop on Wirechestr'. Sim' of Muntfort. Eorl on Leirchestr'. Ric' of Clar' eorl on Glowchestr' and on Hurtford. Rog' Bigod. eorl on Northfolk and marescal on Englenelqand'. Perres of Sauveye. Will' of ffort. eorl on Aubem'. Joh' of Plesseiz eorl on Warewik. Joh' Geffreese sune. Perres of Muntefort. Ric' of Grey. Rog' of Mortemer. James of Aldithel and ætforen oþren inoȝe.

¶ And al on þo ilche worden is isend in to æurihce oþre shcire ouer al þære kuneriche on Engleneloande. And ek in tel Irelande.

Here we remark that in 1258 the letter þ (called 'Thorn') was still in common use. There is one solitary instance of the Roman *th* in the above document, and that is in a family name; by which we may suppose that the *th* was already

<sup>1</sup> From *Facsimiles of National Manuscripts*, photozincographed by Col. Sir H. James, at the Ordnance Survey Office.



recognised as more fashionable. The following is the modern English of this unique proclamation.

¶ *Henry, through God's help, King in England, Lord in Ireland, Duke in Normandy, in Aquitain, and Earl in Anjou, sends greeting to all his subjects, learned and lay, in Huntingdonshire.*

*This know ye well all, that we will and grant that that which our counselors all or the more part of them, that be chosen through us and through the land's folk in our kingdom, have done and shall do, in the reverence of God and in loyalty to us, for the good of the land, through the care of these aforesaid counsellors, be stedfast and lasting in all things without end.*

*And we enjoin all our lieges, in the allegiance that they us owe, that they stedfastly bold, and swear to bold and maintain the ordinances that be made and shall be made through the aforesaid counsellors, or through the more part of them, in manner as it is before said.*

*And that each help the other so to do, by the same oath, against all men : Right for to do and to accept. And none is to take land or money, where-through this provision may be let or damaged in any wise. And if any person or persons come here-against, we will and enjoin that all our lieges them bold deadly foes.*

*And, for that we will that this be stedfast and lasting, we send you this writ open, signed with our seal, to bold amongst you in board (store). Witness ourselves at London, the eighteenth day in the month of October, in the two and fortieth year of our crowning.*

*And this was done in the presence of our sworn counsellors, Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury; Walter of Cantelow, Bishop of Worcester; Simon of Montfort, earl of Leicester; Richard of Clare, earl of Gloucester and Hereford; Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England; Piers of Savoy; William of Fort, earl of Albemarle; John of Plesseiz, earl of Warwick; John Gefferson; Piers of Montfort; Richard of Grey; Roger of Mortimer; James of Alditbel,—and in the presence of many others.*

¶ *And all in the like words is sent in to every other shire over all the kingdom of England : and also into Ireland.*

70. This is not a specimen of 'King's English,' nor of any type of English that ever had a living existence. It is to English something like what the Hindustani of one of our Indian interpreters might be to the spoken language of the natives—good enough to be understood of the people, and clumsy enough to betray the hand of the stranger. It is a piece of official English of the day, composed by the clerk to whom it appertained, off notes or an original draft, which (in

either case) were couched in French. The strength of the composition consists in set and established phrases, which had long been in use for like purposes, and which betray themselves by their flavour of anachronism here. Such are, *fultume, willen and unnen, isetnesses, on* in places where it was no longer usual, and other less palpable anachronisms, among which we should probably reckon the use of the word *hord*.

That this proceeds from the pen of one whose sphere was more or less outside the people, appears from the overcharged rudeness and broadness of many of the forms, running on the verge of caricature. Such are, *loande, Lhoauerd, moare, hoaten, foangen, æurihce, shcire, tel*.

The proportion of French words is so small, compared to the literary habits of the date, that it is plain they have been studiously excluded, even with a needless excess of scruple; for a vast number of French words must before now have become quite popular. Besides *iseined* and *cruninge* the translator might perhaps have safely ventured on the word *purveance* (providence, provision, care,) which is what he had under his eye or in his mind when he in two places employed the uncouth native word *besigte*—a word which probably is nowhere else found. This is not a specimen of any living and growing dialect of English. It is a piece of desk and dictionary work. It is a crude and laboured translation from a French copy.

71. This is not indeed ‘King’s English,’ but it may well stand as a monument of the necessity which produced ‘King’s English.’ It marks the attempt to find among the strife of languages and the Babel of dialects a central and popular medium of communication. The need was at length supplied by the example and usage of the court. If we look forward for a moment to the end of this period when a

standard language was established, we may see what manner of English was in use in the royal family at that time. The following letter from Henry Prince of Wales (afterwards Henry V) to his father, is one of those pieces which enable us to trace the progress of the English language at its centre, and the exactness of the copy may be relied on, as it is one of the pieces given in the photozincographed *National Manuscripts* of the Ordnance Survey.

*Henry Prince of Wales to his father Henry IV,*

A.D. 1402.

My soverain lord and fader, I Recomande me to yowr good and gracieux lordship, as humbly as I can, desiring to heere as good tydingges of yow and yowr hye estat, as ever did liege man of his soverain lord. And, Sir, I trust to God that ye shal have now a companie comyng with my brother of Bedford that ye shal like wel, in good feith, as hit is do me wite. Neverthelatter my brothers mainy [*company*] have I seyn, which is right a tal meyny. And so schal ye se of thaym that be of yowr other Captaines leding, of which I sende yow al the names in a rolle, be [*by*] the berer of this. Also so, Sir, blessid be God of the good and gracieux tydingges that ye have liked to send me word of be [*by*] Herford your messenger, which were the gladdist that ever I mygt here, next yowr wel fare, be my trouth: and Sir with Goddes grace I shal sende al thise ladies as ye have comandid me, in al hast beseching yow of yowr lordship that I mygt wite how that ye wolde that my cosine of York shuld reule her, whether she shuld be barbid or not, as I have wreten to yow my soverain lord afore this tyme. And, Sir, as touching Tiptot, he shal be delivered in al hast, for ther lakkith no thing but shipping which with Goddes grace shal be so ordeined for that he shal not tary. Also Sir, blessid be God, yowr gret ship the *Grace Dieu* is even as redy, and is the fairest that ever man saugh, I trowe in good feith; and this same day th' Erle of Devenshir my cosin maad his moustre [*muster*] in her, and al others have her [*their*] moustre the same tyme that shal go to þe see. And Sir I trowe ye have on [*one*] comyng toward yow as glad as any man can be, as far as he shewith, that is the King of Scotts: for he thanketh God that he shal mowe shewe be experience th' entente of his goodwill be the suffrance of your good lordship. My soverain lord more can I not write to yowr hynesse at this time; but þt ever I beseche yow of your good and gracieux lordship as, be my trouth, my witting willingly I shal never deserve the contrary, that woot God, to whom I pray to send yow al þt yowr hert desireth to his plaisance. Written in yowr tovn of Hampton, the xiiij<sup>th</sup> day of May.—Yowr trewe and humble liege man and sone, H. G.

72. Between these two pieces, namely, that of A.D. 1258

and that of A.D. 1402, a period of 140 years had elapsed; but even this period, which represents four generations of men, would not suffice to allow for the transition of the one into the other in the way of lineal descent. In fact they are not on the same track. The one is a fossilised sample of confused provincialisms, the other a living and breathing utterance of 'King's English.' The following piece has something of the Court English about it, but perhaps it is not in a very good state of preservation. It is taken from Warton's *History of English Poetry* (ed. Price).

*Selections from an Elegy on the Death of King Edward I,  
who died A.D. 1307.*

I.

Alle that beop of huerte trewe  
A stounde herkneþ to my song,  
Of Duel that Deþ haþ diht vs newe,  
That makeþ me syke ant sorewe among:  
Of a knyht that wes so strong  
Of wham God haþ done ys wille;  
Me þunckeþ that Deþ haþ don vs wrong,  
That he so sone shal ligge stille.

II.

Al Englund ahte forte knowe  
Of wham that song is that y synge,  
Of Edward kyng that liþ so lowe,  
Yent al this world is nome con springe:  
Trewest mon of alle þinge,  
Ant in werre war ant wys;  
For him we ahte oure honden wrynge,  
Of Christendome he ber the pris.

X.

Nou is Edward of Caſſaruan  
King of Engeland al aplyht;  
God lete him ner be worse man  
Than is fader, ne lasse of myht,  
To holden is pore men to ryht,  
And vnderstonde good consail;  
Al Engeland forte wisse ant diht;  
Of gode knyhtes darh him nout fail.

## XI.

Tha mi tonge were mad of stel  
 Ant min herte ygotte of bras  
 The godnesse myht y neuer telle  
 That with King Edward was.

## TRANSLATION.

*All ye that be true of heart, hearken ye a while to my song, of grief that death hath lately done us, which maketh me sigh and sorrow as I sing; of a knight who was so strong: of whom God hath done His will. Methinks that Death has done us wrong, that he so soon must lie still.*

*All England ought for to know of whom the song is that I sing—of Edward the king that lieth so low, over all this world his name did spring: truest man in all business, and in war cautious and wise; for him we ought to wring our hands; he bore the palm of Christendom.*

*Now is Edward of Caernarvon king of England assuredly. God grant he be never a worse man than his father, nor less in might, to support his poor men to (obtain their) rights, and to understand good counsel; for to guide and direct all England: of good knights shall not him fail.*

*Though my tongue were made of steel, and my heart cast in brass, I should never be able to tell the goodness that was about King Edward.*

73. But it is in the writings of Chaucer and Gower that we have for the first time the full display of King's English. These two names have been coupled together all through the whole course of English literature. Skelton, the poet laureate of Henry VII, joins the two names together. So does our literary king, James I. So have all writers who have had occasion to speak of the fourteenth century, down to the present day. Indeed, Chaucer himself may be almost said to have associated Gower's name permanently with his own literary and poetical fame, in the terms with which he addressed his *Troilus and Creseide* to Gower and Strode, and asked their revision of his book:—

'O moral Gower, this boke I directe  
 To the, and to the philosophical Strode,  
 To vouchen sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,  
 Of youre benignes and zeles good.'

Thus these two names have grown together, and their connection is soldered by habit and tradition. One is apt to imagine, previous to a study of their works, that they were a *par nobile fratrum*, brothers and equals in poetry and genius, and that they had contributed equally, or nearly so, towards the making of English literature. But this is very far from being the case. That which united them at first, and which continues to be the sole ground of coupling their names together, is just this,—that they wrote in the same general strain and in the same language. By this is meant, first, that they were both versed in the learning then most prized, and both delivered what they had to say in the terms then most admired; and secondly, that both wrote the English of the court. If affinity of genius had been the basis of classification, the author of *Piers Plowman* had more right to rank with Chaucer than the prosaic Gower. But Chaucer and Gower are united inasmuch as they both wrote the particular form of English which was henceforward to be established as the standard form of the national language, and their books were among the leading English classics of the best society down to the opening of a new era under Elizabeth.

74. And now the question naturally rises, What was this new language? what was it that distinguished the King's English from the various forms of provincial English of which examples have been given in the group of writers noticed above, or from *Piers Plowman* and other provincial contemporaries of Chaucer? In answer to this it may be said, that it is no more possible to convey the idea of a language by description than of a piece of music. The writings must be looked into by all who desire to realise the distinctions here to be pointed out. The right course for the student is to master a particular piece, and Chaucer's

Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* is the piece which unites a greater variety of interest in proportion to its extent, than any other production of the fourteenth century.

The leading characteristics of the King's English—the characteristics by which it is distinguished from the provincial dialects—are only to be understood by a consideration of the vast amount of French which it had absorbed. It is a familiar sound to hear Chaucer called *the well of English undefiled*. But this expression never had any other meaning than that Chaucer's language was free from those foreign materials which got into the English of some centuries later. Compare Chaucer with the provincial English writers of his own day, and he will be found highly Frenchified in comparison with them. Words which are so thoroughly naturalised that they now pass muster as 'English undefiled,' will often turn out to be French of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Who would suspect such a word as *blemish* of being French? and yet it is so. It is from the old French adjective *blesme*, which meant sallow, wan, discoloured; and its old verb *blesmir*, which meant as much as the modern French verbs *tacher* and *salir*, to spot and to soil. Then there is the very Saxon-looking word with its *w* initial, to *warish*, meaning to recover from sickness. Sometimes it assumes the form *warsh*, and then it looks still more indigenous; as when it is said that the first sight of his lady in the morning cured him of his sorrow:—

‘That when I saugh her first a morwe  
I was warshed of al my sorwe.’

*The Debe of Blanche*, 1104.

Richardson, in his Dictionary, has provided this word with a Saxon derivation, by connecting it with being *ware* or *warj*, and so taking care of oneself. But it is simply the

French verb *guerir*. These are only two of a whole class of French verbs which have put on the termination *-ish*; such as to *banish*, *embellish*, *flourish*, *nourish*, *punish*, *burnish*, *furnish*, *perish*, *finish*, from the French verbs, *nourrir*, *fleurir*, *embellir*, *bannir*, *punir*, *finir*, *périr*, *fournir*, *burnir* (now *brunir*). They were made subject to the usages of English grammar, as if they had been true natives. Thus we find in Chaucer's *Legende of Goode Women* the verb *banish* with the Saxon verbal prefix *y-*, as—

‘And Brutus hath by hire chaste bloode yswore,  
That Tarquyn shuld ybanyshed be therefore.’

French words in Chaucer and Gower will sometimes assume a form which is *literatim* identical with some common English word. For instance, the French verb *burnir* just cited appears in both these poets in the strangely English and absolutely misleading form of *burned*:—

‘... wrought al of burned steele.’

*Knight's Tale*, 2185; ed. Tyrw.

‘An harnois as for a lustie knight  
Which burned was as silver bright.’

Gower, *Confessio Amantis*.

The difference of look between the French initial *gu* and the English initial *w* often masks a French word. Thus *ward* and *warden* are from the French verb *garder* and the French noun *gardien*. In Chaucer the French word *gâteau* (a cake), anciently *gastel*, takes the form of *wastel*.

75. A large number of Romanesque words are thoroughly imbedded into our speech. The following is an imperfect list of French and Latin words found in the writings of Chaucer:—



|             |              |             |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| abominable  | carriage     | cope        |
| accept      | carry        | cordial     |
| accident    | case         | coronation  |
| accord      | castle       | correct     |
| acquaint    | cattle       | counsel     |
| add         | cause        | countenance |
| advance     | cease        | counterfeit |
| advantage   | certain      | country     |
| advocate    | certes       | courage     |
| adventure   | celestial    | course      |
| adverse     | chamber      | court       |
| affection   | champion     | courtesy    |
| air         | chance       | courteous   |
| alas        | change       | covenant    |
| ally        | charity      | cover       |
| amend       | charm        | coverchief  |
| amiable     | chaste       | creator     |
| appear      | cheer        | creature    |
| appetite    | chief        | credence    |
| array       | chivalry     | crime       |
| art         | chivalrous   | crown       |
| ascendant   | circuit      | cruel       |
| assay       | circumstance | cure        |
| assemble    | city         | custom      |
| assent      | clear        | dainties    |
| assize      | cloister     | damn        |
| audience    | comfort      | dance       |
| auditor     | commend      | danger      |
| authentic   | commission   | debate      |
| avaunt      | common       | debonair    |
| azure       | company      | declare     |
| balance     | compass      | defence     |
| banish      | compassion   | degree      |
| baptise     | complain     | delight     |
| battle      | complexion   | demand      |
| beast       | conclude     | depart      |
| beauty      | conclusion   | describe    |
| benign      | condition    | description |
| benignity   | confound     | desert      |
| besiege     | confusion    | deserve     |
| bible       | conjoin      | desire      |
| blame       | conquest     | despise     |
| blanch      | conscience   | destiny     |
| blanc-mange | conserve     | destruction |
| boast       | consider     | determinate |
| boil        | contagion    | devise      |
| bounty      | content      | devotion    |
| caitiff     | contrary     | devour      |
| cape        | convert      | diet        |
| carpenter   | cook         | difference  |

|             |            |              |
|-------------|------------|--------------|
| digestible  | figure     | jeopardy     |
| diligence   | firmament  | jewel        |
| diligent    | flower     | jocund       |
| discover    | folly      | join         |
| discreet    | fool       | jolly        |
| discretion  | force      | journey      |
| disdain     | forest     | joy          |
| dislodge    | form       | judge        |
| dispite     | fortune    | justice      |
| disport     | fraternity | language     |
| distress    | fruit      | large        |
| divers      | gay        | largess      |
| divinity    | general    | legend       |
| division    | gentle     | letter       |
| doctor      | geometry   | lily         |
| double      | glorious   | lineage      |
| doubt       | gluttony   | luxury       |
| dress       | govern     | madam        |
| ease        | governance | magic        |
| easy        | grace      | magnanimity  |
| easily      | grant      | magnificence |
| effect      | grieve     | malady       |
| element     | guide      | malice       |
| emprise     | guile      | manner       |
| enchantment | gullet     | mansion      |
| endite      | harbour    | mantle       |
| endure      | harness    | marriage     |
| engender    | haste      | martyr       |
| ensample    | haunt      | mass         |
| envenom     | honest     | master       |
| envy        | honesty    | matter       |
| errant      | honour     | measure      |
| escape      | horrible   | measurable   |
| eschew      | host       | meat         |
| estate      | hour       | mediation    |
| eternal     | humble     | melody       |
| excellence  | humour     | memory       |
| exchange    | idol       | mercenary    |
| excuse      | image      | merchant     |
| expound     | incense    | mercy        |
| face        | incline    | merit        |
| faculty     | increase   | message      |
| fail        | infernal   | minister     |
| faith       | innocence  | miracle      |
| false       | instrument | mirror       |
| fame        | intellect  | mischievous  |
| feast       | intent     | mistress     |
| felicity    | ivory      | moist        |
| felony      | jailor     | monster      |
| fierce      | jangle     | moral        |

|              |              |            |
|--------------|--------------|------------|
| mortal       | physician    | receive    |
| name         | piteous      | recommend  |
| natural      | pity         | record     |
| nature       | place        | refuse     |
| nicety       | plain        | region     |
| noble        | planet       | rehearse   |
| note         | pleasance    | release    |
| notify       | pleasant     | remedy     |
| nourishing   | please       | remission  |
| nurse        | plenteous    | renown     |
| obstacle     | poignant     | rent       |
| obstinate    | point        | repent     |
| office       | pomp         | repentance |
| officer      | poor         | report     |
| opinion      | pope         | request    |
| oppress      | port         | require    |
| oppression   | possible     | respite    |
| ordain       | pouch        | restore    |
| order        | pound        | reverence  |
| ordinance    | pourtraiture | robe       |
| organ        | pourtray     | rose       |
| original     | powder       | rote       |
| orison       | practiser    | route      |
| ostler       | pray         | royally    |
| pace         | prayer       | rude       |
| pain         | preach       | sacrifice  |
| paint        | preface      | saint      |
| pair         | prefect      | salvation  |
| pale         | presence     | sanguine   |
| parlement    | pride        | sapience   |
| parochial    | prince       | sauce      |
| party        | princess     | save       |
| pass         | principal    | savour     |
| passion      | prison       | school     |
| patent       | privily      | scholar    |
| patient      | prize        | science    |
| patron       | proceed      | season     |
| peace        | process      | second     |
| penance      | proffer      | secure     |
| people       | promise      | sentence   |
| peradventure | prove        | sergeant   |
| perfect      | purchase     | servant    |
| perpetually  | pure         | serve      |
| persevere    | purge        | service    |
| perseverance | quaint       | session    |
| person       | quantity     | siege      |
| perverse     | question     | sign       |
| pestilence   | quit         | similitude |
| philosopher  | ransom       | simple     |
| philosophy   | reason       | sir        |

|                     |             |           |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------|
| sire                | study       | travail   |
| skirmish            | substance   | treason   |
| sober               | subtilly    | tributary |
| sojourn             | suffer      | turn      |
| solace              | suffice     | tyranny   |
| solemn              | superfluity | tyrant    |
| sort                | supper      | usage     |
| sounding            | table       | vain      |
| space               | talent      | vanish    |
| special             | taste       | vary      |
| spend               | tavern      | very      |
| spicery             | tempest     | vice      |
| spouse              | tent        | victory   |
| squire              | term        | victual   |
| stable, <i>adj.</i> | theatre     | villany   |
| stately             | tormentor   | virgin    |
| statute             | tower       | virtue    |
| story               | traitress   | virtuous  |
| strait              | translation | visit     |

76. These words are still in our language; and beyond these there are many French words in Chaucer which have since been disused, or so much altered as to be of questionable identification. But the general permanence of Chaucer's French words may reasonably be esteemed a proof that he is in no sense the author of this particular combination of the two languages; that he adopted and did not invent the mixture.

The proportion of French was very much more considerable than is generally admitted. Sometimes we meet with lines which are almost wholly French:—

'Was *verray felicitie parfite.*' *Prol.* 340.

'He was a *verray perfit practisour.*' *Prol.* 424.

'He was a *verray parfit gentil knight.*' *Prol.* 72.

'And *sikerly* she was of great *desport*,  
And ful *plesaunt* and *amyable* of *port*;  
And *peyned* hire to *countrefete chiere*  
Of *Court*, and been *estallich* of *manere*;  
And to been holden *digne* of *reuerence.*' *Prol.* 137.

'*Infortunat ascendent tortuous.*' *The Man of Lawes Tale*, 302.

§ 10. *The Bilingualism of King's English.*

77. But we have proofs of more intimate association with the French language than this amounts to. The dualism of our elder phraseology has already been mentioned. It is a very expressive feature in regard to the early relations of English with French. Words run much in couples, the one being English and the other French; and it is plain that the habit was caused by the bilingual state of the population. It is a very curious object of contemplation, and we will collect a few of them here:—

act and deed.

aid and abet.

baile and borowe.

head and chief.

uncouth and strange. *Chaucer's Dreame*, vol. vi. p. 57; ed. Bell.

nature and kind. *Ibid.* p. 55.

disese and wo. *Ibid.* p. 102.

mirth and jollity.

meres and bounds.

huntynge and venerye. *Canterbury Tales*, 2308.

steedes and palfreys. *Ibid.* 2495.

prest and boun. T. Occleve, in Skeat's *Specimens*, p. 20.

And it had already grown into a habit of phrase, for we find it sometimes where both words are of one national source, as

chiere and face. *Canterbury Tales*, 2586.

It is not an unfrequent thing in Chaucer for a line to contain a single fact bilingually repeated:—

‘He was a wel good wriht a carpentere.’ *Prol.* 614.

‘By forward and by composicioun.’ *Id.* 850.

78. Sometimes this feature might escape notice from the alteration that has taken place in the meaning of words. In the following quotation from the Prologue, there are two of these diglottisms in a single line :—

‘A knyght ther was and that a worthy man,  
That fro the tyme þat he first bigan  
To ryden out, he loued chivalrye,  
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisye.’

The last line contains four nouns to express two ideas. ‘Trouthe’ is ‘honour,’ and ‘fredom’ is ‘curteisye.’ The formula, ‘I plight thee my troth,’ is equal to saying, ‘I pledge thee my honour,’ only the former is a more solemn way of saying it—the word *troth* having been reserved for more impressive use. The word *freedom* employed in the sense of gentlemanlike manners, politeness, as the equivalent of *courtesy*, is to be found by a study of our early poetry.

These examples may suffice to shew that this prevalent coupling of words, one English with one French, is not to be explained as a rhetorical exuberance. It sprung first out of the mutual necessity felt by two races of people and two classes of society to make themselves intelligible the one to the other. It is, in fact, a putting of colloquial formulæ to do the duty of a French-English and an English-French vocabulary.

79. At length this ripens into a figure and form of eloquence. Force is given to a statement by saying it in the two languages, provided it can be done gracefully and melodiously. Thus Spenser has occasion to represent that Cambello, though taken by surprise, is nevertheless quite ready to fight, and this important virtue of readiness he makes duly conspicuous by saying it in English and in French. The word *prest* is the modern French *prêt* :—

'He lightly lept out of his place of rest,  
And rushing forth into the empty field,  
Against Cambello fiercely him address :  
Who, him affronting soone; to fight was readie prest.'

*The Faery Queene*, iv. 3. 22.

The two languages became yokefellows in a still more intimate manner. From combination it is but a step to composition. Compounds of the most close and permanent kind were formed bilingually. Some of them exist in the present English. Such a compound is *butt-end*, where the first part is *bout* the French word for *end*. In *besiege* we have a Saxon preposition, which meant 'around,' linked to a French verb *sîger*, to sit; and the compound means 'to sit around' a place. The old word which this hybrid supplanted was *besittan*, from which we still retain the verb to *beset*. So in like manner the genuine Saxon *bewray* was superseded by the hybrid *betray*. A somewhat different case is that of the word *gentleman*, where a French compound *gentilhomme* is half translated and the word has been permanently fixed in a bilingual condition.

80. But there is a combination of a yet more intimate kind between the two languages. Sometimes an English word was retained in the language as the mere representative of some French word. It was divorced from its old sense, and made to take a sense from some French word of contiguous idea. A good example offers in the Prologue:—

'And thogh þat he weere worthy he was wys,  
And of his poort as meke as is a mayde:  
Ne neuere yet no vileynye ne sayde  
In al his lyf vnto no manere wight:  
He was a verray perfit gentil knyght.'

The first line means that although the knight was valiant, yet was he modest, gentle, well-disciplined, sober-minded, as the lines following explain. The word *wys* or *wise* here

does duty for the French *sage*, of which it is enough to say that French mothers at the present day, when they tell a child to be good, say *Sois sage*. It would be a bald rendering of this maternal admonition if it were verbally Englished *Be wise*. Equally far is the use of the word *wise* in that passage of Chaucer both from the old Saxon sense and our modern use. We now use the word just as our early ancestors did, before it had received the French colouring which has since faded out.

81. In this way of representation much in our language is French in spirit though the words are derivatively Saxon. The relative pronouns are a strong example. We have now two relative pronouns, namely, *that* and *which*. The Saxon had only *that*, and there was no other use of *which* but as an interrogative. At this period, in imitation of the French *que* and *lequel*, the interrogative *which* assumed the function of a relative, and in Chaucer we often meet with these two in combination, thus—

‘Nought trowe I the triumphe of Julius,  
Of which that Lucan maketh swich a bost,  
Was roialler ne more curious  
Than was thassemblee of this blisful host.’

*The Man of Lawes Tale*, 400.

And in like manner the relative uses of *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *whence*, *why*, are all of them thinly-disguised imitations of the French. In Chaucer *ther* is the usual relative, instead of *where* as we should now write:—

‘This constable was no thing lord of this place  
Of which I speke, ther he Custance fond,  
But kepte it strongly, many wintres space,  
Vnder Alla, kyng of Northumberlond.’

*The Man of Lawes Tale*, 576.

82. As a result of this redistribution of form and sense, it



happened that words and phrases were produced of which it is impossible to say definitely that they are either French or English. No ingenuity has as yet been able to uncoil the fabric of certain expressions which at this epoch make their appearance. For example, 'He gave five shillings to boot'—what is the origin of this familiar and thoroughly English expression *to boot*? We know of a 'boot' or 'bote' which is native English from the Saxon verb *betan*, to mend or better a thing. The fishermen of Yarmouth have sometimes astonished the learned and curious who have conversed with them, by talking of *beating* their nets (so it sounds) when they mean mending them. In Saxon times *bôtr* was the legal and most current word for *amends* of any kind. It passed into ecclesiastical diction in the term *DÆD-bôtr*, deed-bettering, a word that was replaced in the fourteenth century by the term *penance*. Then *bote* was used later for material to mend with. It was for centuries, and perhaps still is in some parts, a set phrase in leases of land, that though the tenant might not fell timber, yet he might have wood to mend his plough and make his fire, *plow-bote and fire-bote*. It might appear as if little more need be urged for the purpose of shewing that this is also the word in the expression 'to boot.' And yet, when we come to examine authorities, there is great reason to hesitate before excluding the French language from a share in the production of this expression. There are two contemporary verbs, *bouter* and *boutre*, with meanings not widely diverse from each other, in the sense of *putting to*, push, support, prop. Hence we have *abut* and *butress*. The old grammarian Palsgrave seems to imply this French derivation when he says: 'To boote in corsyng [horse-dealing], or chaunging one thyng for another, gyue money or some other thyng above the thyng. What wyll you

boote bytwene my horse and yours? Mettre ou bouter davantaige<sup>1</sup>.

83. Some words, whose form is perfectly English to look at, are nothing but French words in a Saxon mask. The word *business* has not, as far as I know, been suspected, yet I offer it without hesitation as an example. The adjective *busy* existed in Saxon, and although the *-ness* derivative from it is not found, yet it would seem so agreeable to rule and analogy as to pass without challenge. We say *good-ness*, *wicked-ness*, *wily-ness*, *worthy-ness*; why not *busy-ness*? And yet the word appears to be nothing but the French *besogne* or, as it was in early times written in the plural, *besoignes*. Compare the modern French, *Faites votre besogne*, 'Do your duty.' It is possible that the word *busy* may have had that sort of share in the production of the great English word *business* which may be called the ushering of the word. When natives seize upon the words of strangers and adopt them, their selection is decided in most cases by some affinity of sense and sound with a word of their own. A very superficial connection will suffice for this, or else we could not admit *busy* even to this inferior share in the production of the word *business*. For 'a man of business' means, and has always meant, something very different from a man who is busy. Let us hear an independent and competent witness on the signification of this, which is now one of the most characteristic words of our nation:—

'The dictionary definition of Business shows how large a part of practical life arranges itself under this head. It is "Employment; an affair; serious engagement; something to be transacted; something required to be done." Every human being has duties to be performed, and therefore has

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted after Mr. Albert Way in *Promptorium Parvulorum*, p. 45.

need of cultivating the capacity of doing them; whether the sphere is the management of a household, the conduct of a trade or profession, or the government of a nation. Attention, application, accuracy, method, punctuality, and dispatch, are the principal qualities required for the efficient conduct of business of any sort.'—Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help*, chap. viii.

So that the use of this word to the present day corresponds truly to that of the French word *besogne*, in which it seems to have originated.

84. We will close this section with a notice of certain traits which our English poetic diction has inherited from the bilingual period. There is what may be called the ambidextral adjective; where two adjectives are given to one substantive, one being placed before and the other after. At first the prepositive adjective was Saxon and the postpositive one Romanesque; but this was soon forgotten, while the ambidextral habit was retained. Thus Chaucer:—

'I say the woful day fatal is come.'

*The Man of Lawes Tale*, 261.

In the following short quotation from Wordsworth we have two examples:—

'Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient thought  
Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service high.'

*The Prelude*, init.

In one of the best-known pieces of the *Christian Year* we find—

'By some soft touch invisible.' *Morning*.

A more general effect is the enlarged choice of words. A great number of common ideas being now expressed in duplicate, we have often adopted the one for every-day use, and reserved the other for the poetic diction. Thus we

have taken *colour* as the common word, and promoted the Saxon *hue* to a more select position.

‘God, by His bow, vouchsafes to write  
This truth in Heaven above;  
As every lovely hue is Light,  
So every grace is Love.’

John Keble, *Christian Year*, Quinquagesima.

And from the same source the rhetoric of our prose is enriched by variation:—

‘We colour our ocular vision with the hues of the imagination.’—John Henry Newman, *Essays*, Reformation of the Eleventh Century, p. 252.

### § 11. *Conclusion.*

85. The French language has not only left indelible traces on the English, but has imparted to it some of its leading characteristics. Almost every chapter of the present work will contribute its part towards the evidence of this fact; and the few observations which are collected in this part are mostly of such matters as do not appear to claim notice elsewhere.

It must be admitted, that there are many English words of which the derivation cannot be clearly specified, owing to the intimate blending of the French and English languages at the time when such words were stamped with their present form and signification. This blending has, moreover, penetrated deeper than to the causing of a little etymological perplexity. It has modified the vocalisation and even softened the obstinacy of the consonants.

The focus of this blending was the court. The court was the centre which was the point of meeting for the two nationalities, even while it hardly knew of any literature but the French. The court was also the seminary that produced our first national poet. This added greatly to the natural advantages which a court possesses for making

its fashion of speech pass current through the nation. Supposing—and the supposition is not an unreasonable one—that in the struggles of the thirteenth century a great poet had risen among the popular and country party, the complexion of the English language would in all likelihood have been far different from what it now is. Such a poet, whether he were or were not of courtly breeding, would naturally have selected the phraseology of the country and have avoided that of the court. And be it remembered, the language of the country was at that time quite as fit for a poet's use, as was that of the court. It is not at all necessary that the form of a nation's language should be dictated from the highest places of the land. The Tuscan form of modern Italian was decided by the poetry of Dante, at a time when Florence and Tuscany lay in comparative obscurity; and when more apparent influence was exercised by Venice, or Naples, or Sicily. But in our country it did so happen that the first author whose works gained universal and national acceptance was a courtier. This is a thing to be well attended to in the history of the English language. For its whole nature is a monument of the great historical fact that a French court had been planted in an English land. The landsfolk tried to learn some French, and the court had need to know some English; and the language that was at length developed expresses the tenacity of either side and the compromise of the two. This unconscious unstudied compromise gradually worked itself out at the royal court; and the result was that form of speech which became generally recognised and respected as the King's English.

86. In the northern part of the island another centre was established at the royal court of Scotland. Here we may mark the centralising effect of a seat of government upon

a national language. The original dialect of the south of Scotland was the same with that of the northern counties of England, at least as far south as the Trent. This was the great 'Anglian' region. The student of language may still observe great traces of affinity between the idioms to the north and those on the south of the Scottish border. Peculiar words, such as *bairn*, *bonny*, are among the more superficial points of similarity. But we will select one that is more deeply bedded in the thought of the language. There is in Yorkshire, and perhaps over the north of England generally, a use of the conjunction *while* which is very different from that of Queen's English. In our southron speech *while* is equivalent to *during*, but in the northern dialects it means *until*. A Yorkshireman will tell his boy, 'You stay here while I return.' At Maltby there lived, some years ago, a retired druggist, highly respected at the time, and well remembered since. The boys' Sunday school was confided to his management; and he had a way of appealing to them when they were disorderly which is still quoted by those who often heard it: 'Now, boys, I can't do nothing while you are quiet.'

If we look into the early Scottish literature we find that this use of *while* is the established one. Thus Dunbar:—

' Be divers wayis and operatiouns  
Men maks in court their solistatiouns.  
Sum be service and diligence;  
Sum be continual residence;  
On substance sum men dois abyde,  
Quhill fortoun do for them provide.'

That is, 'Some men live on their own means *while*, i.e. until, fortune provides for them.' The same poet has 'quhill domisday' for 'until doomsday.'

The following examples are from Buchanan's version of the famous letters of Queen Mary, reprinted by Hugh Campbell, 1824:—

'You left somebody this day in sadness, that will never be merry while he see you again.'

'I wrought this day while it was two hours upon this bracelet' (i. e. till it was two o'clock).

'He prayed me to remain with him while another morning.'

'Which was the occasion that while dinner time I held purpose to nobody' (i. e. that until dinner time I conversed with nobody).

In Shakspeare, where we find almost everything, we also discover this usage. In one instance it is in the mouth of a Scotchman:—

'While then, God be with you.' *Macbeth*, iii. i. 43.

Pope corrected this reading, and changed the *while* to *till*. In another instance the speaker is a lady of Illyria:—

'He shall conceal it,  
Whiles you are willing it shall come to note.'

*Twelfth Night*, iv. 3. 29.

87. The dialects of our northern counties were anciently united in one and the same Anglian state-language with that which we now call Scottish. The severance which has since taken place, has been due to the division of that which was once an integral territory, consequent upon the establishment of a northern and a southern court in this island. The old uniformity and identity has been broken up, and the political border has long since become, in great measure, a linguistic border also. On the other side of that border is a rustic dialect and a national literature which may picture to our eyes and ears, with some approach to probability, what our English language might by this time have been, if it had been preserved equally free from Romanesque influence. In our own southern land, the growth and expansion of the King's English has so preyed upon the vitals of the Saxon dialects which constitute in fact the mould and the soil out of which the King's English has grown robust, that nothing but a few poor relics are left to them

of their own, and it is no longer possible to institute a comparison between them and the national speech. When, in a season of unusual heat, the potato crop has ripened in the middle of the summer, and produced a second generation of tubers, the new potatoes and the old cling to the same haulm, but those of later growth have left the earlier crop effete and worthless. Even so it is with the dialects—all their goodness is gone into the King's English, and little remains but their venerable forms. Such power and beauty as they still possess they cannot get credit for *carent quia vate sacro*, because they want a poet to present them at their full advantage. Where, in some remoter county, a poet has appeared to adorn his local dialect, we find ourselves surprised at the effect produced out of materials that we might else have deemed contemptible. A splendid example of this is furnished by the poems of Mr. Barnes in the Dorset dialect. Unless a southern fondness misleads us, he has affiliated to our language a second Doric, and won a more than alliterative right to be quoted along with Burns.

88. The great characteristic which distinguishes all the dialects from King's English is this—That they are comparatively unaltered by French influence. In Scottish and provincial glossaries there is too great a readiness to trace words back to French sources. When a great provincial word like the adjective *bonny* or *bonnie* is referred to the French adjective for *good*, masculine *bon*, feminine *bonne*, an example is seen of over-proneness to French derivations. This word is in popular use from the Fens to the Highlands, and widely spread over the central parts of the island. It occurs in Shakspeare, and is familiarly known in the old ballads and romances<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> For an excellent list of illustrations of the use of this word, see Mr. Atkinson's *Glossary of the Cleveland Dialect*, v. Bonny.



It seems never to have borne the sense of good. If it had, that sense, or something like it, would have lingered somewhere. But its sense is one and the same everywhere, north and south. It is that of being joyous, smart, gay, fair to look upon, equally in the person and in the attire. Uniformity of sense over a wide area is evidence that the word must have borne the present sense at the time of its distribution over that area. This sort of argument is not applicable to a modern national expression; but to an old provincial one it is. The reason of this difference is obvious. Where there is a central literature, there is a constant provision for the maintenance of uniformity, even though words are changing their sense. But if a word is used by dispersed groups of people, and that word undergoes change of sense, such change will not be uniform; for there is no standard of conformity. The uniformity then which holds in the use of *bonnie* is, to say the least, a strong ground of presumption that the sense is a well-preserved sense and, so to say, the original sense of that word. It is true we have no surviving instance of a Saxon *bonig*, but it may be reasonably surmised that the word was already in Saxon times spread just as it is now, only in the form of *bonig*. We have the substantive which would naturally form such an adjective. Not the gay attire of a damsel of romance, but something which by analogy may be compared, is called in Saxon *bone*, to be pronounced as two syllables. The rings and chains and barbaric trappings which adorned the figure-heads of the ships of the eleventh century are called in one of the Saxon chronicles *bone*; and this is translated by Florence of Worcester with the Latin *ornatura*, ornament, decoration. Leofric, the first Bishop of Exeter, gave to his cathedral many ornamented objects, and they are all described in his memorandum, which is extant, as *gebonede*

or *y-bonnie-d*. Roods, books, shrines, candlesticks, and other objects, are described as *geboned*, which seems here to imply fine ornamented decoration, probably goldsmith's and silver-smith's work. Here, then, is a sufficient root for the derivation of our *bonnie*, and one which will far better satisfy the requirements of the case. If we look into the cognate languages out of England, we find in Platt-Deutsch the verb *bonen* for the rubbing and polishing up of cabinet furniture. The Danish verb *bone* means the same thing. So does the Swedish verb *bona*. So the German *böhen* is used by Goethe in his *Hermann und Dorothea* :—

Und so sitzend umgaben die Drei den glänzend gebohten  
Runden braunen Tisch: er stand auf mächtigen Füßen.

'And so sitting, the three surrounded the bright polished round brown table: it stood on mighty feet.'

89: But it is not by wresting a few native words from the French category that we are to succeed in establishing the comparative 'purity' of the Scottish-Anglian and of our provincial dialects, as compared with the Queen's English. The real characterising distinction of the latter is not that it took in more French words, or even that it blended French and English features together till they were undistinguishable in many words; but, that the sound, the rhythm, the modulation, the music of the language was one entirely new. Every Englishman knows that it is comparatively easy to understand the dialects in print, but often quite impossible in conversation. The main cause of this is the unfamiliar rhythm. The English language is one which has from long mixture with the French obtained, not indeed the French intonation, but a new one of its own; and herein will probably be found to lie the essential characteristic which sets our English apart from its old relatives as a new and distinct variety of the old Gothic stock, and one from

which the world may see a new family of languages ultimately engendered. To this result a long train of conditions contributed; and we are able in some measure to trace the causes from the time when the Roman colonisation infected the Keltic speech of the island, and prepared the mould into which the Saxon immigration was to be received. But all other causes recede into insignificance, compared with the long rule of French-speaking masters in this island. If we want to describe the transition from the Saxon state-language of the eleventh century to the Court-English of the fourteenth, and to reduce the description to its simplest terms, it comes in fact just to this:—*That a French family settled in England, and edited the English language.*



## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE ENGLISH ALPHABET.

90. ALPHABETIC writing appears to have been an outgrowth of that picture-writing which is still in use among savages; and of which there is a poetical description in the *Song of Hiawatha*, Canto xiv. At first the writing was altogether pictorial—that is to say, the thing pictured was the thing meant, either simply or symbolically. When Charles Dickens was at Harrisburgh (Pennsylvania) in 1842, he saw a number of treaties which had been made with the Indians, and their signatures were rough drawings of the creatures or weapons they were emblematically called after. This picture-writing is commonly spoken of as hieroglyphic.

Next, the thing pictured stood for the sound of its name, wherever that sound was required, whether to speak of that very thing or of some other thing with like-sounding name. This is the state of Chinese writing. It is as if (to adopt Mr. Tylor's illustration) a drawing of a pear were made to do duty for the words *pare*, *pear*, and *pair*, with signs to guide the reader which sense he was to attach to the sound. This tends towards the formation of a syllabarium, which is a set of phonetic characters, not of vowels and consonants but of syllables: and this is the completion of the second or syllabic stage of writing.

The third stage is where each figure represents only a consonant or a vowel, which we call the alphabetic system. Some national methods of writing have failed to arrive at this, and have remained stationary midway. Others, as the ancient Egyptian, having gone through all the stages, retain something of each and present a mixture of all, not having become purely alphabetic.

91. That improvement and simplification which resulted in the Alphabet was effected chiefly by the transference of the system of writing from one race to another. In the hands of a strange race it would undergo a new test of applicability, and many old hieroglyphic relics would be purged away. Thus the Chinese writing has led to syllabaries among the Japanese, and to an alphabet among the Coreans; and Ewald says that the art of writing which the Israelites certainly practised when they left Egypt, was a genuine product of the reciprocal action of Egyptian and Semitic culture. It seems to be almost determined by science that Egypt was the birthplace of the Semitic art of writing, which is only the archaic form of the European; and in perfect accordance therewith, legend points to Phœnicia as the quarter from which the alphabet passed into Greece.

Purely alphabetic as modern European writing is, there are still some visible traces of its pictorial origin. The first four Roman numerals, I, II, III, IIII, for instance, are pictorial of that which is alphabetically expressed by the words *one*, *two*, *three*, and *four*. We may imagine that they represent so many fingers, or sticks, or notches, or strokes. It has been also supposed that the numeral V may have originated in a rude drawing of the open hand with the thumb stretched out and the fingers close together. Again, when we read in our almanacs '○ before clock 4 min.' and

'D rises at 8 h. 35 min.' we have before us a mixture of the pictorial and the alphabetical, the most elementary and the most consummate method of writing.

92. Our nation, in common with the other nations of western Europe, has adopted the Roman alphabet. This change began in the latter end of the sixth century, but it was not completed at a single step.

This alphabet was introduced into our island from two opposite quarters, from the north-west by the Irish missionaries, and from the south-east by the Roman missionaries. It is to be remembered that when our Saxon ancestors were pagans and barbarians, Christian life and culture had already taken so deep a hold of Ireland that she sent forth missions to instruct and convert her neighbours. Their books were written with the Roman alphabet, which they must have possessed from an early date, and to which they had already imparted a distinct Hibernian physiognomy. Of the two denominations of missionaries which thus from opposite quarters entered our island, one gained the ecclesiastical pre-eminence; but the other, for a long time, furnished the schoolmasters.

Hence it was that an insular calligraphy was retained for centuries, the Anglo-Saxon writing being formed after the Irish and not after the Roman model.

93. But another style of alphabetic writing had been in use among our Saxon ancestors from time immemorial—one that was not quickly to be superseded by clerical penmanship, whether Irish or Roman. This was the RUNIC, a system of writing which had existed among the Gothic nations from an unknown antiquity<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Some however think that the Runic Alphabet was rudely imitated from Greek or Latin coins. See Vigfusson, *Icelandic Dictionary*, p. xv. He considers, for instance, that the þ is the Latin D, with its stem prolonged both ways.

The name Runic was so called from the term which was used by our barbarian ancestors to designate the mystery of alphabetic writing. This was RUN sing., RUNE pl., and also RUN-STAFAS, Rune-staves, or, as we should now speak, Runic characters. This word RUN signified mystery or secret; and a verb of this root was in use down to a comparatively recent date in English literature, as an equivalent for the verb to whisper. In a 'Moral Ode' of the thirteenth century it is said of the Omniscient,

'Elche rune he ihurð & he wot alle dede.'

*Each whisper he bears, and he knows all deeds.*

In Chaucer's *Friar's Tale* (7132) the Sompnour is described as drawing near to his travelling companion,

'Ful prively, and rouned in his ere';

i. e. quite confidentially, and whispered in his ear. It was also much used in the mediæval ballads for the chattering and chirping of birds, as being unintelligible and mysterious, except to a few who were wiser than their neighbours; as—

'Lenten ys come with love to tounne,  
With blosmen and with briddes rounne.'

94. It was used also of any kind of discourse; but mostly of private or privileged communication in council or conference:

'The steward on knees him sat adown,  
With the emperor for to rowne.'

*Richard Coer de Lion, 2142; in Weber's Metrical Romances.*

These uses of the term are very ancient; in the Mæso-Gothic Gospels we find *runa nēmun*, they took counsel, Matt. xxvii. 1. and other instances.

This *rown* became *rownd* and *round*, on the principle of



n attracting a d to follow it; see below, 138. As in *The Faery Queene*, iii. 10. 30 :—

‘But Trompart, that his Maistres humor knew,  
In lofty looks to hide an humble minde,  
Was inly tickled with that golden vew,  
And in his eare him rownded close behinde.’

In the following passage from Shakespeare, *The Winter’s Tale*, i. 2. 217, the editor Hanmer proposed as a correction, ‘whisp’ring round’ :—

‘They’re here with me already; whisp’ring, rounding.’

Thus the word RUN had a progeny something like that of the Latin word *litteræ*; whence ‘letter,’ ‘letters’ for learning, erudition; also ‘literature,’ ‘literary.’

95. The *Runes* were a short alphabet of sixteen letters only. They were differently shapen from the Roman characters, being almost free from curved or wavy lines, and a mere composition of right lines at various inclinations and elevations relatively to each other.

This rigidity would naturally have resulted from the fact that they were used chiefly in the way of incision on hard materials such as wood, bone, stone, and metal. Indeed the word *write* (German *einrizen*) seems properly to belong to this runic sort of inscription, as it is aptly worded in the Exeter Song-Book :

Ræd sceal mon secgan,  
Rune writan.

*Rede is thing for man to say,  
Rune to write.*

*Codex Exoniensis*, p. 342, ed. Thorpe.

It is not easy to present a pure and original Runic alphabet because of the early influence of the Roman alphabet upon it. There was also a certain tendency to mix up signs for whole words with signs for letter-sounds, so that a doubt is thrown over the nature of some of the characters.

The extant Runic literature is mostly carved on stone, arrows, axes, knife-handles, swords and sword hilts, clasps, spear-heads, pignons of metal, amulets, rings, bracelets, brooches, combs, horns, bracteates, coffins, bells, fonts, clog-almanacks—and very little in books. The elder specimens have been collected and illustrated by Professor George Stephens, of Copenhagen. Runic inscriptions are chiefly found in the northern and western extremes of Europe, the parts which were never visited by Roman armies, or where (as in this country) great immigrations took place after the Romans had retired. There are Scandinavian Runes, and English Runes, and German Runes. These have some differences between them, but they agree in the main features. It is by comparing these together, and eliminating their differences, that we determine which were the original sixteen characters.

96. They appear to have been the following :—

|   |   |    |        |   |   |
|---|---|----|--------|---|---|
| ᚠ | ᚢ | ᚦ  | ᚨ      | ᚱ | ᚷ |
| F | U | TH | O      | R | K |
| ᚨ | ᚱ | ᚢ  | ᚦ      | ᚷ |   |
| H | N | I  | A or Æ | S |   |
| ᚢ | ᚦ | ᚨ  | ᚱ      | ᚷ |   |
| T | B | L  | M      | Y |   |

Others were perhaps added later, as—

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ᚨ | ᚱ | ᚢ | ᚦ | ᚷ | ᚢ | ᚷ |
| C | E | G | P | Q | W | A |

This distinction of the Runes into elder and younger has been called into question. Professor Stephens with great force maintains that the oldest Runic alphabet was most various and multiplex.

When our Saxon ancestors adopted the use of the Latin alphabet, they still retained even in book literature two of the Runes, because there were no Roman characters corresponding to them. One was the old Thorn, þ, for which the Latin mode of expression was by the use of two letters TH, and the other was the more local p, called Wen, which was superseded by a double U or V after the Conquest.

07. The þ had a more prolonged career. This, and a modified Roman letter, namely Ð ð, divided the *th* sound between them; and all through the Saxon period they were used either without any distinction at all or with very ill-observed discrimination, until they were both ultimately banished by the general adoption of the TH. This change was not completely established until the very close of the fifteenth century. And even then there was one case of the use of the Rune þ which was not abolished. The words *the* and *that* continued to be written *þe* and *þat* or *þʰ*. This habit lasted on long after its original meaning was forgotten. The þ got confused with the character *y* at a time when the *y* was closed a-top, and then people wrote 'ye' for *the* and 'yat' or 'yt' for *that*. This has lasted down close to our own times: and it may be doubted whether the practice has entirely ceased even now.

Ben Jonson, in *The English Grammar*, considered that by the loss of the Saxon letters þ and ð we had fallen into what he called 'the greatest difficulty of our alphabet and true writing,' inasmuch as we had lost the means of distinguishing the two sounds of *th*, as in *this*, *that*, *them*, *thine*, from the sound of the same character in *thing*, *thick*, *thread*, *thrive*. The same regret has been expressed by Rask.

As a means of distinguishing these two sounds, the letters þ and ð might have been highly serviceable; but that they

were ever used with this discrimination in Saxon literature there is little if any evidence to prove.

The older Saxon scholars, namely, Spelman, Somner, Hickes, and Lye, held that  $\text{ð}$  represented the sound in *thin*, and  $\text{þ}$  that in *thine*. Rask, in his Saxon Grammar, maintained the contrary; and he was followed by Jacob Grimm. Rask's argument is well worth the attention of the student, for whatever the validity of the conclusion, it is a good sample of phonetic reasoning. It is very little based on the direct evidence of Saxon documents, and almost entirely upon comparison with the Icelandic and Old (i.e. continental) Saxon. Mr. H. Sweet maintains that originally they both denoted the same sound, namely that of *dh*, as in *thine*.<sup>1</sup>

98. When, in the sixth century, the Latin alphabet began to obtain the ascendancy over the native Runes, the latter did not at once fall into disuse. Runes are found on grave-stones, church crosses, fibulæ, &c., down at least to the eleventh century. The Isle of Man is famous for its Runic stones, especially the church of Kirk Braddan. These are Scandinavian, and are due to the Norwegian settlements of the tenth century. For lapidary inscriptions, clog almanacs, and other familiar uses, it is difficult to say how long they may have lingered in remote localities. In such lurking-places a new kind of importance and of mystery came to be attached to them. They were held in a sort of traditional respect which at length grew into a superstition. They were the heathen way of writing, while the Latin alphabet was a symbol of Christianity. The Danish pirates used Runes at the time when they harried the Christian nations. There is a marble lion in Venice, on which is a Runic inscription,

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<sup>1</sup> *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, Appendix I.

which commemorates a visit of one of the northern searovers at Athens (where the lion \*then was) in the tenth century. After a time the Runes came to be regarded as positive tokens of heathendom, and as being fit only for sorcery and magic.

99. In the eleventh century our alphabet was changed; the old Saxon forms (which were in fact Hibernian) being superseded by the French form of the Roman writing. During the succeeding centuries this new character assumed a variety of guises, but there was one particular form which acquired predominance north of the Alps, the form which is known to us as 'Black Letter,' and which was hardly less rectilinear than the old Runes themselves. This form was maintained in Germany down to our times, but now it seems to be yielding to that character which has become general throughout modern Europe. This character, in its two forms of 'Roman' and 'Italic,' is of Italian growth, and took its final shape in the fifteenth century, in association with the invention of printing and the revival of letters. The following table exhibits the chief forms under which the Roman alphabet has at different times been used in these islands:—

| IRISH. |   | SAXON. |   | MEDIEVAL. |   | ROMAN. |   | ITALIC. |   |
|--------|---|--------|---|-----------|---|--------|---|---------|---|
| 2l     | < | A      | a | Æ         | a | A      | a | A       | a |
| b      | b | B      | b | B         | b | B      | b | B       | b |
| C      | c | L      | c | C         | c | C      | c | C       | c |
| δ      | δ | D      | δ | D         | d | D      | d | D       | d |
| e      | e | e      | e | E         | e | E      | e | E       | e |
| f      | f | F      | f | F         | f | F      | f | F       | f |
| 3      | 3 | L      | 3 | G         | g | G      | g | G       | g |
| h      | h | h      | h | H         | h | H      | h | H       | h |
| i      | i | I      | i | I         | i | I      | i | I       | i |
|        |   |        |   | J         | j | J      | j | J       | j |

| IRISH. | SAXON. | MEDIEVAL. | ROMAN. | ITALIC.    |
|--------|--------|-----------|--------|------------|
|        | K k    | K k       | K k    | <i>K k</i> |
| l l    | L l    | L l       | L l    | <i>L l</i> |
| ſ m    | ƿ m    | ſ m       | M m    | <i>M m</i> |
| M n    | N n    | N n       | N n    | <i>N n</i> |
| o o    | O o    | O o       | O o    | <i>O o</i> |
| p p    | P p    | P p       | P p    | <i>P p</i> |
|        |        | Q q       | Q q    | <i>Q q</i> |
| ſ p    | R r    | R r       | R r    | <i>R r</i> |
| ſ r    | S s    | S s       | S s    | <i>S s</i> |
| ſ t    | T t    | T t       | T t    | <i>T t</i> |
| U u    | U u    | U u       | U u    | <i>U u</i> |
|        |        | V v       | V v    | <i>V v</i> |
|        | p p    | W w       | W w    | <i>W w</i> |
|        | X x    | X x       | X x    | <i>X x</i> |
|        | Y y    | Y y       | Y y    | <i>Y y</i> |
|        | Z z    | Z z       | Z z    | <i>Z z</i> |
|        | þ þ    |           |        |            |
|        | ð ð    |           |        |            |

100. We now pass from the forms of the Roman alphabet to note some of the local peculiarities of its use among ourselves. And first, of our vowels, and the remarkable names by which we are wont to designate them. Our names of the vowels are singularly at variance with the continental names for the same characters. Of the five vowels *A E I O U*, there is but one, viz. *o*, of which the name is at all like that it bears in France or Germany. But it is in the names of *A* and *I* and *U*, that our insular tendencies have wrought their most pronounced effect. The first we call by an unwriteable name, and which we cannot more nearly describe than by saying, that it is the sound which drops out of the half-open mouth, with the lowest degree of effort at utterance. It is an obscurely diphthongal sound, and if we

must spell it, it is this—*Ae*. The character *I* we call *Eye* or *Igh*; the *U* we call *Yew*.

101. The extreme oddity of our sound of *U* comes out under a used-up or languid utterance, as when a dilettante is heard to excuse himself from purchasing pictures which are offered to him at a great bargain, on the plea that ‘they do ac-cyew-myew-layte [accumulate] so!’ In France this letter has the narrow sound which is unknown in English, but which it has in Welsh, and which seems ever ready to degenerate into *Y*: in Germany it has the broad sound of *oo*.

102. That *I* was called *Eye* in Shakspeare’s time, seems indicated by that line in *Midsummer Nights Dream*, iii. 2. 188:—

‘Fair Helena; who more engilds the night,  
Then, all yon fierie oes and cies of light.’

Where it seems plain that the stars are called *O*’s and *I*’s.

If this passage left it doubtful whether the letter *I* were sounded in Shakspeare’s time as it is now, there is a passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 2, which removes the doubt:—

‘Hath Romeo slaine himselfe? say thou but I,  
And that bare vowell I shall poyson more  
Than the death-darting eye of Cockatrice:  
I am not I, if there be such an I;  
Or those eyes shot, that makes thee answer I.  
If he be slaine say I; or if not, no:  
Briefe sounds determine of my weale or wo.’

Here it is plain that the affirmative which we now write *ay*, and the noun *eye*, and the pronoun *I*, and the vowel *I*, are regarded as having all the self-same sound.

103. With reference to these strange insular names of our vowels, there is an observation to be made, which has, I think, been overlooked. The names of the five vowels are, *Ae*, *Ee*, *Igh*, *Oh*, *Yew*; but these names, which are distinctly our own, and among the peculiarities of our language, do not

in the case of any single vowel express the prevalent sound of that vowel in practical use.

The chief sound of our *A* is that which it has in *at, bat, cat, dagger, fat, gander, hat, land, man, nap, pan, rat, sat, vat, wag*. It has another very distinct sound, especially before the letter *L*, namely the sound of *aw*: as, *all, ball, call, fall, gall, hall, malt, pall, tall, talk, wall, walk, want, water*. But the sound which is expressed in the name *Ae* is a dull diphthongal sound, which *A* never bears in any word except when to the *a* an *e* is appended, not immediately indeed, but after an intervening consonant: as, *ate, bate, cate, date, fate, gape, hate, jape, late, make, nape, pane, rate, state, tale, vale, wane*. This final *e* must be considered as embodied with its *a*, just as in the German sound *ä* which is only a brief way of writing *æ*. It is difficult to suppose that the name of our first vowel has been dictated by the sound which it bears in the last-mentioned list of instances. There is no apparent reason why that class of instances should have drawn to itself any such special attention, to the neglect of the instances which more truly exemplify the power of the vowel. But there is one particular instance of the use of *A* which is sufficiently frequent and conspicuous to have determined the naming of the letter. I can only suppose that the name which the letter bears has been adopted from the ordinary way in which the indefinite article *a* is pronounced.

104. The vowel *E*, when single, does not represent the sound *Ee* which its name indicates. When it is doubled, it always has this sound, as in *beer, creed, deer, feet, greet, heed, jeer, keep, leer, meed, need, peep, queer, reed, seed, teem, weep*. But the single *e* only does so when it is supported by another *e* after an intervening consonant. Examples: *bere, cere, here, intercede, intervene, mere, scene*.

We are therefore driven to look for some familiar and



oft-recurring words which have the *e* exceptionally pronounced as *Ee*. And such we find in the personal pronouns. The words *he, she, me, we*, have all the *e* long, and if they were spelt according to their sound, they would appear as *hee, shee, mee, wee*. In proof of this may be cited the case of the pronoun *thee*, which is written with its vowel double, though it has no innate right in this respect over the pronoun *me*. In the solitary instance of *thee*, it was a matter of convenience to write the double vowel, that the word might be distinguished at sight from the definite article *the*. It is by reference then to the function of the letter *e* in the personal pronouns, that we explain the name of *Ee* by which that vowel is incorrectly designated.

It is interesting to remember that in Devonshire (unless the schoolmaster has driven the fashion out) the letter *E* is called *eh*, like *hay* without the *h*, or like the French *è ouvert* somewhat continued. This may be derived from the period of French tuition; or it may be that Devonshire preserves the old Saxon dialect of Wessex in this particular as it does in so many others; or thirdly, the Saxon and the French had one sound and one name for *E*; and this seems the most probable account of the matter.

105. It may be left to the reader to observe by a collection of instances, like *bit, dip, fit, hit, nip, sit, wit*, that the name which we have given to the vowel *I* does by no means give a just report of the general sound of that letter in our orthography. In what syllables is that *eye* sound represented by *i*? Only in two kinds. The first is where it is supported by an *e*-subscript, as *bite, kite, mine, pipe, wine*; the other case is where it has an old guttural after it, as *high, night, might, light*. In short, the name of *Igh* does not represent truly the general use of this vowel. To account for its having acquired so inappropriate a name, we

must again seek for a familiar and frequent word in which the vowel does bear this sound. We find it in the personal pronoun *I*, which we might have written as *Igh* with equal propriety, and on the same principles as have determined the orthography of *right*, *might*, *sight*. The Saxon form was *Ic*; the German form is *Ich*, the Dutch *Ik*, the Danish *Jeg*, and the Swedish *Jag*. So that in fact the name we have bestowed on *I* is not the due of that vowel in its simplicity, but only of that vowel after it has absorbed and assimilated an ancient guttural.

106. The *O* offers less to remark on than the other vowels. It has been the most stable member of our vowel-system, and that in which we are most in harmony with our neighbours.

107. Of the *U*, it is very obscure what has led to its name. The pronunciation of the *u* as *yew* can hardly be of East-Anglian growth, though natives of that province sometimes bring in the sound unexpectedly. When they utter the words *rule*, *truth*, *Jerusalem*, with energy, they have been observed to convert them into *ryule*, *tryewth*, *Jeryewsalem*. I have seen it somewhere suggested that possibly this peculiar vowel-sound has risen out of a distorted effort to imitate the inimitable French *U*. There is perhaps some measure of truth in this idea. A very peculiar *u* exists in Devonshire, one which is near the French, and one which would seem to have been inherited from British pronunciation, if we may judge from its proximity to the Welsh *U*. Now this Devonshire *u* is not at all *yew*, but it has been often so reported of, and tourists tell how in that strange land they heard the natives say *byewts*, *myewn*, for boots, moon. I do not believe they ever heard any such thing, and I take their evidence to be good only to shew that there is some point of contact between the French *u* and the *yew* sound, at least on the ear. Thus the idea that our *yew* grew out of

the French *u* is plausible. But I do not think it to be correctly stated in this form, and for the following reason :— the sound recurs in many independent and external places. The Dutch *nieuw* indicates by its orthography the same sound as our *new*. The Danish *lys*, light, is pronounced *lyews*, and in Swedish it is phonetically so written, namely *ljus*. The tree which in English is called *yew* was in Saxon written *iw*, from which we gather that the pronunciation is unaltered. These instances seem to shew that the sound we are treating of was an anciently inherited one, and if French influence had anything to do with putting it on our *u*, it only caused the extension of a sound already domestic and familiar.

Not without an apparent connection is our pronunciation of the noun *eue*, to which in sound we prefix a *y*.

To so great a length have I pursued this subject of the naming of our vowels, because it is in fact a most exceptional and insular phenomenon. As a criterion of the whole case we might refer to the designations of the five vowels in French or German, and the reasonableness of those designations. If this were done, the result would be something as follows. The French and Germans have named the vowels, but the English have nick-named them. When a man is called a king or a servant, <sup>he</sup> ~~he~~ is characterised by what may properly be called a name. But if we call him Longshanks or Peach-blossom, we nick-name him. And this is analogous to what we have done with the vowels. We have given them names which are expressive, not of their general functions, but of some prominent anomaly or adventitious oddity in their accidental associations.

108. The tendency of observations like the above, arising out of the arbitrary naming of our vowels, is to create in the mind an impulse such as that which is attributed to

the etymologists of a past age, to reject the vowels altogether as if they were hopelessly beyond the reach of scientific method. Each vowel sign has such a variety of sounds in English, and each sound has such a variety of vowel signs, and these so cross each other's track, that anything like disentanglement and orderly arrangement might well be despaired of, if there were no help to be found beyond the limits of the single language. But much of that which is arbitrary or accidental may be eliminated by the process of comparing two dialects together, and then a third with the results of the first comparison, and so on; sifting each time the net product to a clearer expression; till we at length reach the conclusion that a phonology or science of vocal sounds is possible. It is found that there are three principal sounds, which are those of 'a,' 'i,' 'u'—that is to say, not according to the value of these signs in the English naming, Ae, Igh, Yew, but according to the value which they most commonly represent in European languages, and which we may spell thus, ah, ee, oo. It is the sound of 'a' in *father*, of 'i' in *dig*, and of 'u' in *full*. It will be convenient to distinguish these signs by quotation marks, when we use them for the true and principal sounds. That these are the cardinal vowels, can be shewn in two ways.

109. Either we may observe the organs of speech, or we may examine those languages in which the vowel system is most robust and symmetrical. There is one dialect of our family which is distinguished for such a vocalism, and that is the Mæso-Gothic. In this dialect, all the vocalic and diphthongal sounds are so regularly derivable from these three, that we are compelled to regard the 'a,' 'i' and 'u' as fundamental, at least for that particular language. Other languages are found to contribute, some more some less, to

the general adoption of this trio of vowel-sounds as the basis of phonology.

The observation of the organs of speech leads to a like result. If we regard the mouth from the throat to the lips as a 'musical and variable tube, we may easily observe that the 'i' is produced at the innermost extremity of that tube, and the 'u' at its outermost elongation; while the 'a' is produced in the centre with the most open and arched and resonant position of the entire organ. Of this central vowel, Mr. Hullah says:—'On one vowel only is the timbre of the human voice to be heard in its highest perfection—the vowel *a* pronounced as in the English word "father<sup>1</sup>." And again:—'Recent physiological researches have justified the choice of *aa* not merely as the vowel on which the voice is heard to the greatest advantage, but also as that on which, with a view to its improvement, it should be most exercised.'

110. There is no doubt that the *a* in Saxon writing represented this 'a' sound, sometimes short as in *van*, sometimes long as in *father*. The distinction between the originally short and long is matter rather of Saxon than of English phonology, and we shall only notice it when it invites attention incidentally. This 'a' had already in Saxon times lost much of the ground it once occupied, especially the short 'a.' And many examples which then existed are now lost.

The single instance of *-as*, the plural form of an increasing group of substantives, presents a great amount of loss in regard to this principal vowel-sound. The 'a' is lost in every one of those instances; and words which were written *dagas*, *endas*, *fixas*, *pathas*, *smithās*, *stanas*, are now written with a toneless *e* as in *fishes*, or a merely orthographic *e* as in *stones*; or else, and this is the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Cultivation of the Speaking Voice*, Clarendon Press Series, ch. vii.

commonest result, it has left no trace behind, as in *smiths*, *days*, *ends*, *paths*. But then it is in flexional terminations that the vowels degenerate most rapidly, and we must not hastily conclude that the 'a' is becoming a stranger to our language, as some phonologists seem almost to do, when they speak of this chief vocal sound as 'the Italian A.' I am informed by a practised phonologist that the ancient name of this vowel, by which it is called *aa* or *ah*, is still traditional in some parts of the West, though I cannot say that I have verified the fact.

111. Words in which the Saxon 'a' is fully retained:—*addle*; *adesa*, *adze*; *ancra*, *anchor*; *and*; *anfilt*, *anvil*; *ask*; *assa*, *ass*; *awul*, *awl*; *alr*, *alder*; *apul*, *apple*; *blac*, *black*; *brand* (fire-); *candel*, *candle*; *cat*; *crabbe*, *crab*; *fann*, *fan* (*vanus*); *gader*, *gather*; *gang-wæg*, *gang-way*; *ganra*, *gander*; *garleac*, *garlic*; *galga*, *gallow*; *halgian*, *hallow*; *hand*; *lamb*; *land*; *malwe*, *mallow*; *man*; *panne*, *pan*; *plant*; *ramm*, *ram*; *sadol*, *saddle*; *sand*; *span* (subst.); *stand*; *swalewe*, *swallow*; *tan*; *wann*, *wan* (colour).

Words in which the character is preserved but the sound altered to *ae*:—*apa*, *ape*; *cara*, *care*; *cran*, *crane*; *cafer*, *chafer*; *capun*, *capon*; *cradel*, *cradle*; *faran*, *fare*; *hara*, *hare*; *nihtscada*, *nightshade*; *raca*, *rake*; *sala*, *sale*; *scamu*, *shame*; *spada*, *spade*; *sam*, *same*; *tam*, *tame*; *wacian*, *wake*.

Words in which it has become *o*:—*camb*, *comb*; *clað*, *cloth*; *fald*, *fold*; *gast*, *ghost*; *halig*, *holy*; *lang*, *long*; *maðu*, *moth*; *rap*, *rope*; *sang*, *song*; *strang*, *strong*; *tacen*, *token*; *tange*, *tongs*.

Words in which it has become *o* with subscript *e*:—*ban*, *bone*; *dran*, *drone*; *ham*, *home*; *lar*, *lore*; *mara*, *more*; *rah*, *roe*; *rap*, *rope*; *sar*, *sore*; *sla*, *sloe*; *stan*, *stone*; *spaca*, *spoke* (of a wheel). The Saxon *ma* became at first *mo*; later *mce*, in accordance with fashion. In *Henry VIII*, ii. 3. 97.

the first and second folios have *mo*, the third and fourth *moe*.

Words in which the Saxon *a* has become *oa*:—*âc*, *oak*; *âð*, *oath*; *âr*, *oar*; *bât*, *boat*; *brâd*, *broad*; *gâd*, *goad*; *gât*, *goat*; *hâr*, *hoar*; *hlâf*, *loaf*; *lâd*, *load*; *lâm*, *loam*; *râd*, *road*; *wâd*, *woad*. It may be safely asserted that the original 'a' in all these cases was long; but that the Saxon long 'a' did not always produce English *oa*, *bân*, *bone*; *stân*, *stone*, and other instances, will readily shew.

In one instance this *oa* has drawn in a cockney *r*, namely, *hâs*, *hoarse*. In Devonshire the true analogy is preserved, and this word is pronounced *hoase*.

112. As we have now seen that the Saxon *a* has broken and dissipated itself into a variety of modifications, so now on the other hand we must see what compensation there has been that this chief vowel should not perish out of the language. We shall find that many words which in Saxon had not 'a,' but some weaker and softer vowel, have now by some means acquired it. Change from *æ* to *a*:—*æcern*, *acorn*, (according to a rare pronunciation); *æfter*, *after*; *æsc*, *ash*; *ælmesse*, *alms*; *æx*, *axe*; *bæð*, *bath*; *dræg-net*, *drag-net*; *fæf*, *fat* or *vat*; *fæder*, *father*; *fæpm*, *fathom*; *fæst*, *fast*; *glæs*, *glass*; *gærs*, *grass*; *gnæt*, *gnat*; *hæfde*, *had*; *hlædder*, *ladder*; *lætta*, *lattice*; *mæddre*, *madder*; *mæst*, *mast*; *rædic*, *radish*; *ræfter*, *rafter*; *tæppere*, *tapster*.

Other words with *æ* have acquired the character but not the sound of 'a' central:—*æcern*, *acorn* (according to the common pronunciation); *bæcere*, *baker*; *blæd*, *blade*; *hæsel*, *hazel*; *hwæl*, *whale*; *smæl*, *small*; *wæter*, *water*; *wæsp*, *wasp*.

There are many instances in which *ea* became 'a' or *a*: as, *beag*, *badge*; *ceaf*, *chaff*; *fealu*, *fallow*; *fleax*, *flax*; *gealla*, *gall*; *geard*, *yard*; *heall*, *hall*; *heard*, *hard*; *hearp*, *harp*; *pearruc*,

*ark*; sealt, *salt*; sceaft, *shaft*; scearp, *sharp*; steal, *stall*; weal, *wall*; wearp, *warped*. This was for the most part a reversion to the older form.

Miscellaneous examples of the present use of 'a' where the Saxon had some inferior vowel are—breml, *bramble*; steorra, *star*; steort, *start*, as in red-start and Start Point.

113. In the transition period the Saxon character *æ* was dropped, and *a* was often written in its place. Sometimes this gives an appearance of the recovery of 'a,' which is not real; because under the guise of *a* it is the Saxon *æ* that is heard. Thus the Mæso-Gothic *akr* is the archaic Saxon *acer*, the classic Saxon *æcer*, and the English *acre*: but the pronunciation of the two latter is substantially identical. There is, however, a considerable number of cases of the undoubted recovery in English of an 'a' that in classic Saxon had fallen into an inferior sound. The following are instances of words which had possessed this sound, in the earlier Saxon period, had lost it in the classic stage, and recovered it again in the transition to modern English:—

| SAXON 1. | SAXON 2. | ENGLISH. |
|----------|----------|----------|
| after    | æfter    | after    |
| Alfred   | Ælfred   | Alfred   |
| at       | æt       | at       |
| bæð      | bæð      | bath     |
| crat     | cræt     | cart     |
| pað      | pæð      | path     |
| was      | wæs      | was      |

114. The same may be shewn of some other weakenings of 'a,' which occurred in the literary Saxon period, and were corrected in English:—

| SAXON 1.   | SAXON 2.   | ENGLISH.   |
|------------|------------|------------|
| aldorman   | ealdorman  | alderman   |
| ærcebiscop | ercebiscop | archbishop |
| half       | healf      | half       |
| ward       | weard      | ward       |



We do not reckon *al*, *eal* (all) as belonging to this list, because the sound of the English vowel here is not 'a,' but the diphthong *au*.

As far then as regards the possession of this chief of vowel-sounds, there was a great redistribution, and while some words lost it, others acquired or recovered the 'a' vowel. If from the Saxon words we proceed to consider those of French and Latin origin, we soon perceive that the Romanesque contact was favourable to the restoration of this vowel to something like a proportionate place among the vowel-sounds. It is not necessary here to transcribe examples: the student can easily acquaint himself with them by the help of the list at 75.

115. When we attribute to any word the possession of a true 'a,' we mean that if the word be adequately pronounced, that sound is heard. In average conversation or reading this vowel is too often slurred or squeezed up between the consonants. Indeed, it is a great fault in our utterance that our vowels are so skipped, till our whole speech seems to the foreign ear what Welsh looks to the foreign eye—a mass of consonants. Our language might be improved, if it were made an aim in education that boys should not only articulate the consonants, but also give due expression to the vowels. If men have not time to say their words any more fully than is absolutely necessary for the transaction of business, we may at least hope that boys have: and as the importance of musical instruction is now appreciated, the moment seems favourable for winning attention to the culture of our vowel-pronunciation.

116. I advance the statement with some diffidence, and I commend it to further observation; but it seems to me that the vowels are not always most satisfactorily uttered by those who have had the benefit of a careful education. When I seek a

standard of pronunciation for any particular vowel, it seems to present itself to me in some specimen of rustic diction. This is the case as regards the 'I.' While there are many words in cultured English that have the true 'i,' there are not many that strike the ear as models of that incisive sound. But if it ever happened to any reader to be standing by when two boys ran a race in Devonshire, he may have heard their several favourers encouraging them to 'rinn' in so clear a note than the vowel might thenceforward live in his ear as a sample of the true 'i.' 'Rinn Jack! rinn, Joe! rinn, rinn, rinn!'

117. Words in which Saxon 'i' is fully retained :—*biddan*, *bid*; *cicen*, *chicken*; *cin*, *chin*; *disc*, *dish*; *fill*; *finc*, *fench*; *finger*; *fifta*, *fifth*; *fiftig*, *fifty*; *flint*; *gift*; *begin*; *grist*; *hit*, *it*; *hricg*, *ridge*; *hring*, *ring*; *king*; *lifer*, *liver*; *litel*, *little*; *micg*, *midge*; *mid*; *midl*, *middle*; *mist*; *ribb*, *rib*; *sicol*, *sickle*; *scip*, *ship*; *sið*, *sith*; *smith*; *spin*; *spit*; *stirap*, *stirrup*; *swift*; *þistl*, *thistle*; *thing*; *wincian*, *wink*; *wind*; *winter*.

Words in which the character is retained but with the sound altered to *igh* or *eye* :—*blind*; *bridle*; *briht*, *bright*; *cild*, *child*; *dicere*, *diker*; *fif*, *five*; *grind*; *hid*, *hide* (skin); *hind* (cerva); *hrind*, *rind*; *ive*, *ivy*; *lif*, *life*; *liht*, *light*; *lim*, *lime*; *miht*, *might*; *mil*, *mile*; *min*, *mine*; *niht*, *night*; *riht*, *right*; *ridan*, *ride*; *scir*, *shire*; *scrie*, *shrike*; *scrin*, *shrine*; *swin*, *swine*; *þin*, *thine*; *wif*, *wife*; *wiht*, *wight*; *wild*; *wis*, *wise* (adj.); *wise* (subst.); *win*, *wine*.

In *isgicel*, *icicle*, the first *i* is altered, the second has remained true.

The Saxon 'i' has sometimes turned to *ee* or *ie*; as, *flis*, *fleece*; *slife*, *sleeve*; *scir*, *sheer*; *sife*, *sieve*.

The instances in which we have acquired 'i' in the stead of some less characteristic vocalism are few :—*seolc*, *silk*; *weoce*, *wick* of candle; *spreot*, *sprit* (bowsprit); *meolc*, *milk*.

118. The 'U' is best pronounced in the rustic speech of the north of England. The northerners are weak in the 'i,' which is apt to run into a *u*, as *hull* for *hill*: and in the 'a' also—*man* is apt to sound in North Britain as *mon* or *mun*. But their 'u' is often perfect; and when I travel northward, I consider myself to be then among people of the northern tongue, when I hear the frequent exhortation 'Cum, cum!' uttered with such a genuine 'u' that he who has once heard and heeded it, will require no further evidence as to what was the ancient pronunciation of the verb *cuman*.

This letter now represents the long 'u' sound in very few words: *bull*, *bush*, *full*, *pull*, *push*, *puss*. The word *put* has this vocalism in some mouths, and the word *punish* had rather than has; for we may regard the pronunciation 'poonish' as now obsolete.

119. The following words have preserved the Saxon *u* short:—*bucca*, *buck*; *butan*, *but*; *dust*; *fuller*; *furh*, *furrow*; *hunt*; *hundred*; *hunter*; *iung*, *young*; *nut*; *must* (in brewing); *nunne*, *nun*; *sunder*; *sunne*, *sun*; *sumor*, *summer*; *tunne*, *tun*; *turf*; *tusk*; *puma*, *thumb*, *under*, *up*: and the following have the *u* long—*cuð*, *couth*; *purh*, *through*.

In the following it has changed to *ou*, or *ow*:—*clut*, *clout*; *cusloppe*, *cowslip*; *cu*, *cow*; *grundeswelge*, *groundsel*; *hu*, *how*; *hund*, *hound*; *hus*, *house*; *husel*, *housel*; *lus*, *louse*; *mus*, *mouse*; *muð*, *moult*; *pund*, *pound*; *scrūd*, *shroud*; *tûn*, *town*; *pusend*, *thousand*; *ule*, *owl*; *ut*, *out*.

Sometimes the Saxon 'u' became *o*, but the elder sound is still heard in many of the instances:—*hunig*, *honey*; *munuc*, *monk*; *sum*, *some*; *sunu*, *son*; *tunge*, *tongue*; *wulf*, *wolf*; *wurm*, *worm*; *wurð*, *worth*. It has been questioned what is the relation of this to the 'u'; but I am disposed to think that these have the true 'u' sound though short; and certainly a better example of the 'u' long can hardly be

produced than our present utterance of wudu, *wood*; wul, *wool*.

The elongation of this vowel has in a few instances produced a disyllabic word out of an old monosyllable; as, bur, *bower*; scur, *shower*; to which we might add, if pronunciation only were considered, sur, *sour*.

Of the instances in which we have acquired a *u* in place of some other vowel, the most noticeable is where it has taken the place of an old 'i':—irnan, *run*; risc, *rush* (juncus).

120. When in philology we call these three the elementary vowels, we do not imply that they are the 'original' vowels, or that languages which exhibit these three with the purest and best defined expression, are therefore in the most primitive condition. In like manner, when we bestow the name of 'primary' upon the three prismatic colours, the priority thus attributed is one of thought, and derived from analysis, not a matter of the order of time. And when we find a language like the Gothic exhibiting a regular vowel-system markedly based on the three primary vowels, we only conclude that the national consciousness must have been for a long time awake to this element of pronunciation.

The vowels which claim our attention after 'a' and 'i' and 'u', are o and e. The natural relation of these inferior vowels to the Three, may be rudely figured as in the subjoined diagram:

Tbroat   I        e        A        o        U   Lips.

Of the O it has already been incidentally shewn that it may have grown out of the A or out of the U, and that it therefore is intermediate to these two.

121. The E is the most frequent of all the letters of the English alphabet. This is well known to printers, and also to decipherers of cryptograph. It occasions the weak point

of any simple cypher. If a person attempts concealment by merely substituting some fixed letter or figure in place of each letter of his words, the decipherer will at once detect every *æ* in the performance: first by their numerical preponderance, and then by their position. As *o* between 'A' and 'U', so *æ* has its seat between 'A' and 'I': and it is easy to point to instances in which it has been produced by the enfeeblement of one or other of these elementary vowels. Of the derival of *æ* from *æ* we have an instance in the words *England, English*; the people from whom these names are derived being written down in the Saxon Chronicles as *Angel cynn*. The relation of *æ* to *i* is sufficiently indicated by the pronunciation of *England*, in virtue of which it has an *i* in some of its foreign translations, as in the Italian *Inghilterra*. But the use of *æ* that tends more than any to the overwhelming preponderance of this character in our books, is the *e*-subscript. Of this *æ* no particular origin can be assigned; it may be the relic of any one of the vowels.

*E* has many varieties of sound: it has the sound of *a*, as in *there*; it has the sound of 'i,' as in *England, English*; when doubled it has the sound of long 'i,' as in *seen*; lastly, as *e* subscript, it has no sound of its own at all. This single line contains three of these uses, and at the same time it shews with what a frequency this character is capable of appearing.

' Seen here and there and everywhere.'

H. W. Longfellow, *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

122. But it is time to rescue ourselves from the petty minutiae of a subject whose details are divided and subdivided and crossdivided so perplexingly. Turn we a moment from these chiplets to view the machine that flings them out: and perhaps the contemplation of it may lead us to some observations of a more substantial and prehensible kind.

‘The vocal mechanism,’ says Professor Willis<sup>1</sup>, ‘may be considered as consisting of lungs or bellows, capable of transmitting, by means of the connecting wind-pipe, a current of air through an apparatus contained in the upper part of the windpipe, which is termed the larynx. This apparatus is capable of producing various musical (and other) sounds, which are heard after passing through a variable cavity consisting of the pharynx (the cavity behind the tongue), mouth, and nose.’ If the whole of this arrangement is required for the vocal mechanism, it is only the outer part of it which we shall regard as the instrument of speech, namely, the larynx and the variable cavity. Of these two, the larynx is to the variable cavity or oral tube what the vibrating mouthpiece which generates the note is to the variable tube of some wind-instruments. Our power of observation is practically confined to the oral tube in regard to which it has been already said that the three chief vowels are produced at its three most distant points, that is to say, at the two extremities and in the middle. We will proceed to consider how these and other prominent vowel-sounds may be brought into effective action by means of contrast.

Variable  
cavity

Larynx

Windpipe

Lungs  
or  
Bellows

### *Of the Ablaut.*

123. At some distant time, before the historical era of the Gothic languages, the primitive community became aware that they might enlarge the range of their speech, if they only spaced their vowels well; and they prosecuted this sentiment until they actually multiplied three-fold, or even

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *The Cultivation of the Speaking Voice*, by John Hullah, Clarendon Press Series, 1870.

four-fold, the expressive powers of their inherited vocabulary. The German name of Ablaut has become so established, and it is so widely used, that it seems better to adopt it with an explanation than to seek a vernacular substitute for it. Glossarially, it would be represented by Off-Sound; and the name imports a certain offing or distancing of vowel-sounds, whereby simple words have been provided with a ready change of form, and have thus been promptly qualified to express a contrast of signification. Relics of this method of variation are strewn about our vocabulary. There is the verb to *bind*, and the substantive *band*, and another substantive *bond*. Or compare the verb to *shear* with the substantive *share* and the adjective *sheer*, and another substantive *shire*, and yet another *shore*,—and we see what a variety of service one consonantal framework may perform, with the aid of a well-defined vowel-differentiation.

124. But it was in the verbal conjugation that the Ablaut found its peculiar home, and there it took formal and methodical possession. In that position it became the chief means of expressing the distinction of Time, superseding almost entirely the previous habit of denoting the Past by Reduplication. The clearest examples of this systematic vowel-change that the English language affords are to be found in the old verbs, and in those especially which have their chief time-distinctions based upon the vocalic series *i, a, u*; as the following:—

|        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|
| drink  | drank  | drunk  |
| begin  | began  | begun  |
| shrink | shrank | shrunk |
| sink   | sank   | sunk   |
| sing   | sang   | sung   |
| slink  | slank  | slunk  |
| spin   | span   | spun   |
| spring | sprang | sprung |

125. In these examples the regularity of the Ablaut is manifest, even in the literary language. If we take account of the inroads that time and neglect have made on this ancient structure, we may often supply the slight restoration that is required to bring many other verbs into this table. Thus, if we remember that the verb to *run* is originally *rin*, we have at once the series, *rin*, *ran*, *run*. After this pattern we may sometimes reconstruct old verbs that have had their conjugation modernised. When we read in Chaucer of the feelings of the woman who was ready to burst till she had told her secret, how that

‘Hir thoughte it swal so soore aboute hir herte’

*Wif of Bath's Tale*, 967,

we may surmise not only that our preterite *swelled* is a modernism, but also that the spelling of *swell* was formerly *swil*; and then if we compare the Moeso-Gothic we actually find *swil*, *swal*, *swul*, to have been the Ablaut of that verb.

Analogies are often caught beautifully by children. I have heard *dag* as the preterite of *dig*. Also the original preterite of the verb to *sing* I heard from the mouth of a little maid of four years old, who said to her father, in rich tones of genial enquiry which writing cannot render: ‘If a bee stang you, dad; would you cry?’

Enough has now been said to indicate that the Ablaut is a vowel-differentiation of words, and that its character depends upon that distinctness of the vowels from which it obtains its value, and force, and title. They need not always be quite so chromatically distinct as A, I, U. A humble instance of Ablaut may be quoted which took place in the seventeenth century, when the word *then* was differentiated into the two forms *then* and *than*. The term Ablaut comprehends all such instances of differentiation.



*Of the Umlaut.*

126. The Umlaut, on the contrary, is not so much a vowel change, as a vowel modification. In order to see what it is that induces this modification, we may revert to the parallel between the organs of speech and a wind instrument. In an elaborate instrument, with keys and other adjustments, if all the parts are not in smart working order, there will be a danger lest each note should modify its successor. The keys have been touched for a given note, and unless they promptly recover their normal position, something will be heard of the first note at the time when the second is delivered. So it is in language: a letter or a syllable is apt to carry on its influence to the letter or syllable that succeeds. In the neighbourhood of Bath, the childish form of the name of that city is Bab. Here we see the second consonant has been overpowered by the first. In the Finnish and Samoyed languages, this principle has developed into a remarkable vowel-harmony, according to which the vowel of the stem of a word determines the vowel of the affix. Thus *hoba*, skin, makes its ablative *hobahad*; *warnge*, crow, makes it *warngehed*; *ano*, boat, makes the same case *anohod*; *habi*, servant, makes *habihid*; and *paeidju*, lump, makes the ablative *paeidjuhud*<sup>1</sup>. In all these instances we see the vowel of the affix harmonised to the nearest in the stem: and we recognise the development of a natural tendency into a law.

Among ourselves this tendency is checked, where it is noticed at all; but for the most part it is simply neglected. In the schools, children are allowed to utter such thick-lipped

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<sup>1</sup> M. Alexander Castrén, *Grammatik der Samojedischen Sprachen*, St. Petersburg, 1854; p. 25.

vocalisms as *Mosos*, *Dublun*, *righteousnuss*; and it passes for articulate reading if only the consonants are expressed.

127. The Umlaut of the Indo-European languages is a phenomenon of a different order. Here the vowel of the after-member of the word influences that which has gone before, so that a present vowel is influenced by one yet unspoken.

It seems as if we ought to take into our philological consideration the fact that the human organ of speech, while it is an instrument, is not a mere instrument; inasmuch as it contains bound up in the same constitution with itself the performer also. It would seem as if the consciousness which the moral agent has of the task before it, influenced a present utterance by the presentiment of that which is to follow. The Umlaut is a modification that has risen in our stock of languages within the historical period. There is no trace of it in the Mæso-Gothic, but it appears in the Old High Dutch and Anglo-Saxon. Yet the Mæso-Gothic supplies the conditions out of which it has grown.

If we look at Mark i. 16 we see the word *nati*, where our English Testament has *net*. Here the *i* of the termination has drawn the *a* towards it, and has harmonised it into *e*. The action of the Umlaut continued visibly to alter the shapes of words during the whole Saxon period. Thus the same word would appear with an 'a,' or an *æ* in the stem, according as it had a full or a thin vowel in the termination. For example, the word *day* was *dæg* in the nominative (pointing to an earlier *dagi*), *dæges* and *dæge* in the genitive and dative singular; but in the plural it made nom. *dagas*, gen. *daga*, dat. *dagum*. So likewise *stæf*, a letter, plur. *stafas*; *hwæl*, a whale, plur. *hwalas*; *pæð*, a path, plur. *pæðas*. Our modern pronunciation of the word *day* retains the trace of this Umlaut, which the orthography obscures; for it exactly corresponds to *dæi*, the

orthography which succeeded, to *dæg*. And, to take an example from adjectives, the word *small* bears no trace, either in its spoken or in its written form, of having formerly been subject to Umlaut; but such was the case. It appears as *smæl*, *smælre*, *smælra*, *smælne*; a thin vowel being, or having been, though here unwritten, in every one of these cases next after the *l*. Again, it appears as *smalu*, *smalum*, *smala*, *smalan*, and it was by the preponderance of these that our modern form was determined.

128. The Conquest gave the death-blow to the Umlaut among us, and even the traces of it were largely obliterated. Nowhere is any structural signification attached now to an Umlaut form, except in those few plurals which, like *feet*, *geese*, *men*, *mice*, are found by inward alteration of the vowel. The Germans have retained this plural function much more largely than we have, and also another of far greater scope and utility; for they have converted this modification into a means of differentiating the indicative from the subjunctive mood, thus—*hätte*, *habebat*; *hätte*, *haberet*.

### *The Consonants.*

129. The consonants will be most conveniently arranged in the order according to which they recede more and more from the nature of the vowels. We begin with the half vowels, *W* and *Y*.

Before the Conquest the character *W* was little used. Where the Anglo-Saxon printed books have it, the manuscripts have the old Rune *p*. But after the Conquest, when a great many Romance words beginning with *V* were coming into the English, and a distinction had to be made between this sound and that of the old *p*, it was effected by a double *v*. But it must carefully be observed that the novelty

as regards the *w* was only in the character and not in the sound. The sound of *w* had long been in the language, having been embodied with it when the Wessex speech first assumed shape as a distinct Saxon dialect. It is now one of the chief characteristics of our language among the other members of its family; and it must be attributed to the mingling of the Saxons with the British Kelts in the fifth and sixth centuries. As an initial it is emphatically a product of the West, and would hardly have existed had our language been educated in the Eastern Counties. The sound of the *w* may be described as a consonantism resulting from the collision of 'u' with another vocalic sound. Say *oo* first, and then say *ee*: if you keep an interval between, the vocalic nature of each is preserved, but if you pass quickly from the utterance of *oo* to that of *ee*, you engender the consonantal sound *w*, and produce the word *we*. Any vowel coming into collision with 'u' will engender the *w*. It is said in Grammars that *w* (like *ɣ*) is a consonant when it is initial, either of a word or syllable; and a vowel elsewhere. According to this rule (which fairly states the case) we find that *w* is a vowel now, where once it was a consonant. Take the word *few*, in which *w* has only a vocalic sound; this word was once a disyllable *feawa*, and then the second syllable *wa* gave the *w* a consonantal value.

130. *Y* is a Greek letter adopted by the Romans, and used in Saxon writing for the thin *u* (like French *u* or German *ü*) apt to be confused with *i*. The French call it the Greek *I*, 'I grec.'

*Y* appears only as a vowel all through the Saxon literature, and it was after the Conquest that the consonantal function was added to the vocalic. The *ɣ* stepped into the place of an ancient *g*-initial, which was in a state of decay. This is the history of *ɣ* in such words as *ye*, *yes*, *yet*, *year*, *yard*, *yare*, *yearn*, *yelp*,

*yield*, from the older forms *ge*, *gesè*, *gił*, *gear*, *geard*, *gearo*, *georn*, *gilpan*, *gield*. In the earlier stages of this transition, there appeared for two centuries or more (the twelfth to the fourteenth) a separate form of letter, neither *g* nor *y*, which was written thus ȝ, and was ultimately dropped. It was a pity we lost this letter, as the result has been a heterogeneous combination of functions under the letter Y which it is difficult for a learner to disentangle. Had we retained the consonant ȝ we might have avoided the unnatural combination of vowel and consonant functions in a single letter.

In old Scots it slid into the form of *z*, as in the following, where *year* is written *zeir* :—

‘In witness quhairof we haif subscrivit thise presents with our hands at Westminster the 10th day of December, the zeir of God 1568 Zeirs.

JAMES, Regent, &c., &c.’

So *yet* was written *zit*, as in Buchanan’s *Detection* :—

‘Quhilk wryting being without dait, and thocht sum wordis thairin seme to the contrarie, zit is upon credibill groundis supposit to have bene maid and written be hir befor the deith of hir husband.’

Its present value is half vowel and half consonant. Like the *w*, it is a consonant in the beginning of a word or syllable and a vowel elsewhere. This gives the *y* a peculiar position in English which it does not hold in other languages. Our consonantal sound of *y* is represented in German and Danish and Swedish by *j*. In the English *young* the *y* sounds exactly as the *j* sounds in German *jung*, or in the Danish pronoun of the first person *Jeg*, Swedish *Jag*.

131. The bringing out of this consonantal *y* is a feature of the modern language. If it existed in Saxon times, it was not expressed in writing, except in so far as we can suppose the *g* to have expressed it, as in *lufge*, I love, and in the words above quoted. It is in the West that this *y* displays itself most conspicuously. In Barnes’s poems we

meet with *yable*, able; *j'achèn*, aching; *yacre*, acre; *yakker*, acorn; *yale*, ale; *yarbs*, herbs; *yarm*, arm; *yarn*, earn; *yarnest*, earnest; *yea*, Saxon *eacnian*; *yeaze*, ease.

On Sunday evenings, arm in arm;—

‘O’ Zunday evemens, yarm in yarm:—’

and first they’d go to see their lots of pot-herbs in the garden plots;

‘An’ vust tha’d goo to zee ther lots

O’ pot-yarbs in the ghiarden plots.’

The value of *y* has been further complicated by means of the fashion which prevailed in the fifteenth century of substituting it often for *I*. Already in the fourteenth century, in an *A B C Poem*, we find the letter *y* thus introduced:

‘Y for I in wryt is set.’

A reaction followed and corrected this in some measure; but still too many cases remained in which the *y* had become fixed in places where an *i* should have been. A conspicuous example is the word *rhyme*, which is from the Saxon *rim*, number, and which Dr. Guest always spells *rhime* in his *History of English Rhythms*. Possibly the *y* was put for *i* in *rhyme* from confusion with the Greek *ῥυθμος*; as we certainly do owe many of our *y*’s to the Greek *υ*, such as *tyrant*, *zephyr*, *hydraulic*, *hyssop*, *hypocrisy*, *hypothesis*.

The consonantal value of *y* is not to be traced wholly to the decay of the initial *g* as if that were its origin. This does not account for the initial sound of *y* in the pronunciation of *eue*, or in the unwritten name of the vowel *u*. The ancient initial *g* would not account for that tendency to the development of a consonantal *y*, which may be seen below, 141. The Saxon *iwa*, which had no initial *g*, Old High Dutch *iwa*, German *Elfe*, has become *yew* in English.

132. The next in order are the Spirants, H, S, Z, and partially C.

H, in the ancient language, was a guttural. This letter has undergone more changes of value since its introduction into our language than any other letter. It is now a mere dumb historical object in many cases, and where it has any sound it is merely the sign of aspiration. It is almost classed with the vowels, as in the familiar rule which tells us to say *an* before a word beginning with a vowel or a silent H. It once had in English the force of the German *ch*, or even of the Welsh *ch*.

This ancient guttural is heard now only in those portions of the Anglian provinces which are in the southern counties of Scotland, and the northern counties of England. There you may still hear *licht* and *necht*, for *light* and *night*, pronounced in audible gutturals. In the Anglo-Saxon these were written with the simple H thus, *liht* and *niht*, but pronounced gutturally. As we now regard c and k as interchangeable in certain cases, e. g. Calendar or Kalendar, so in the early time stood c and H to each other. There were a certain number of words in which the Anglian c (of the time of Bæda) was represented by a Saxon H. The word *berct*, bright, is of frequent occurrence in the Ecclesiastical History of the Angles. It occurs in proper names, as Bercta, Berctfrid, Berctgils, Bercthun, Berctred, Berctuald, Cudberct, Hereberct, Huætberct. The same was also freely used in Saxon names, but in them the Anglian c became H, *briht* or *beorht*: Brihthelm, Brihtnop, Brihtric, Brihtwold, Brihtwulf, Ecgbriht, Cuðbriht. This H retained its guttural force down to the middle of the fourteenth century, as may be shewn from the orthography of that period. For example, *sixt thou* for *seest thou*, or rather *sehest thou*, in Piers Plowman i. 5, is evidence that his *sicht*, sight, was gutturally pronounced.

As the H began to be more feebly uttered, and it was no

longer regarded as a sure guttural sign, it had to be reinforced by putting a c before it, as in the above *licht* and *necht*; or by a g, as in *though*, Saxon *beah*; *daughter*, Saxon *dohler*. But the gh had little power to arrest the tendency of the language to divest itself of its gutturals, and gh in its turn has grown to be a dumb monument of bygone pronunciation.

133. S is a letter of many affinities. It is apt to change with h the aspirate, as we know by comparison of the Greek *he*, *hus*, *hex*, *hepta*, with the Latin *se*, *sus*, *sex*, *septem*. The affinity of h and s comes out boldly in the comparison of Irish with Welsh, thus :—

| IRISH.              | WELSH. |
|---------------------|--------|
| sen, <i>old</i>     | hen    |
| sior, <i>long</i>   | hir    |
| salaun, <i>salt</i> | halen  |
| samh, <i>summer</i> | haf    |

It interchanges with T, as between German and English : *Wasser*, water; *weiß*, white; *heiß*, hot. This is included in the Lautverschiebung, 12.

Very little change has taken place in the use of s since Saxon times; and in the vast majority of instances its position in English and German are alike, and indeed in all the Gothic family of languages. One remarkable exception to this uniformity of the area of s, is its use in Mæso-Gothic in many words where the other dialects have r.

| MÆSO-GOTHIC.   | ENGLISH. | GERMAN. |
|----------------|----------|---------|
| <b>mais</b>    | more     | Mehr    |
| <b>basi</b>    | berry    | Beere   |
| <b>hausjan</b> | hear     | Hören   |
| <b>dius</b>    | deer     | Thier   |

134. Z is a letter of late introduction. During the Saxon time it appears in Bible translations in names like *Zacheus*,



*Zacharias*; and otherwise only in one or two stray instances, e. g. *Caziei*, for the French town-name *Chezy*, as in the following description of the path of the Northmen in France:—

‘887. Her for se here up þurh ða brycge æt Paris. and þa up andlang Sigene oð Mæterne. and þa up on Mæterne oð Caziei.’

887. This year went the horde up through the bridge at Paris, and then up along the Seine to the Marne, and then up the Marne to Chezy.’

We find *s* put for *z* as late as the fifteenth century: e. g. *Sepherus* for *Zephyrus*.

Nor is this letter anything more than a foreigner among us now. There will be found very few genuine English words with a *z* in them.

For the use of *c* as a spirant or sibilant, see 139.

135. The next in order are the Liquids *L*, *M*, *N*, *R*. These letters hold a similar position in all the great languages, though subject to occasional peculiarities of utterance, such as the ‘*L mouillé*,’ or the nasal *m* and *n* of the French, with which we have little to do. They have undergone little or no variation in passing from the Saxon into the English language, except that *r* has doubtless lost something of its earlier resonance.

Of these liquids, *L* and *R* group together, as being more vocalic than the other two. These have a softening effect upon vowels, as may be seen by reference to the vowel-lists above, e. g. 114; while *M* and *N* on the other hand have a conservative effect. With respect to the Mutes, *m* has a great attraction for *b*, and *n* for *d* or *t*.

136. There remain the Mutes; and these are they which were spoken of at the outset in relation to the law of *Lautverschiebung*. They are subdivided into the Labials, Dentals, and Gutturals. The Labials are *P*, *B*, *F*, *V*.

*P* is a letter that was not much used in Saxon as an initial

letter of words. In Kemble's Glossary to the *Beowulf*, he has given only three words under the letter *p*; and in Bouterwek's Glossary to *Cædmon* there are only two, both of which are comprised in the former three. Thus two glossaries of our two oldest national poems exhibit only three words beginning with *p*. One of the three is now extinct, but the other two are quite familiar to us; they are *path* and *play*. These were, in the eighth century, exceptional words in English, from the fact that they began with *p*. And to this day it may still be asserted that almost all the English words beginning with *p* are of foreign extraction.

137. *B* is a great companion of *m*, as *climb*, *lamb*, *timber*. In a number of instances it has been brought into the word by the *m*, as *limb* from *lim*; *number* from the Latin *numerus*.

*F* has sometimes become *v* in English: as *æfen*, *even*; *lifer*, *liver*; *lufu*, *love*. And indeed the Saxon *f* seems to have represented the *v*-sound rather than that now attached to it. This is also the use of this character in Welsh.

*V* as a distinct consonant came in after the Conquest, with such French words as *uirtue*, *uisage*, *uaine*, *ueray*, *uenerie*. The character *v* as distinct from the vowel *u* was not established until the seventeenth century.

138. The Dentals are *T*, *D*, *TH*.

*T* has an affinity to *n* and this is why a sermon is apt to be called a *sermont*. It is also sometimes drawn in by *s*. In Acts xxvii. 40, we read 'hoised up the main-sail,' where we should now say and write 'hoisted,' not for any etymological reason, but from a purely phonetic cause.

*D* has a like affinity for *n*, and is often brought into a word by the *n* as a sort of shadow. In the words *impound*, *expound*, from the Latin *impono* and *expono*, the *d* is a pure English addition: so likewise in *sound* from French *son*,

Latin *sonus*. Provincial phonetics go still further, and call a gown *gound*. See above, 94.

D has also a disposition to slip in between L and R. Thus the Saxon *ealra*, gen. plur. of *eal*, all, became first *aller* and then *alder*, as in 'Mine alder-liefest Sovereign,' 2 *Henry VI*, i. 1.

TH has been touched on above, 97, in connection with the Rune Þ; but its more modern relations have to be considered here. It has two sounds: one which nearly approaches the lisp, as in *thin*; the other, which is more vocal, as in *thine*. The latter is sometimes represented by *dh*. Both are pre-eminently English, although the *dh* is heard in Danish at the end of some words where *d* is written, as in *brod* bread, *ved* with, pronounced *brodh*, *vedh*. There are but three European languages, besides our own, that have a well recognised TH-sound, the Welsh, the Spanish, and the Greek. The latter has both the sounds; the Spanish gives the lisp *th*-sound to *c* before *e* or *i*; the Welsh has the vocal sound in the strongest form, written as *dd*. Neither of the sounds is heard in German, though *th* is written, as in *Thier*, *Thal*. In French also it is written, but not heard: as *thé*, pronounced *tay*. The TH with its twofold value is one of the most characteristic letters of our language, and more than any other the Shibboleth of foreigners.

139. The Gutturals are C, K, G, CH, J, H, Q, X.

The Tenues are C and K. Here we must begin by putting aside the sibilant use of *c*. The earliest instance of it is in the Saxon Chronicle of Peterborough, anno 1128, where *milce* appears for the Saxon *millse*, through the influence of the French *merci*. This, which we may call the French *c*, is used before the vowels I and E as, *city*, *centre*. How far there was even in Saxon times a distinct sound of *c* in those instances which have become *ch* and *tch* in English, is one of

the obscure questions of Saxon phonology. In other cases it had the  $\kappa$  sound, which it still has before *a, o, u*, as in *call, cob, cut*.

K is not properly a Latin, but a Greek letter. In Roman writing it had a very undefined position as a superfluous character, a mere duplicate-variety of *c*. This was also its position through the whole period of Anglo-Saxon literature; it was a mere fancy to write  $\kappa$ , and it meant nothing different from the *c*. But very soon after the Conquest, the greater frequency of  $\kappa$  is observable; and it went on increasing just in proportion as the value of *c* became equivocal through its Frenchified employment with the sound of *s*. Already in the twelfth century,  $\kappa$  is found to have a place and function of its own to the entire exclusion of *c*, namely, before the vowels *e* and *i*, the cases in which *c* had gone off into the *s*-sound. Thus the old words *cene, cempa*, warrior, *Cent, cepan, cyn, cyng*, were in the twelfth century written constantly as *kene, keen, kempa, champion, Kent, keep, kin, king*. But when it had to be doubled, it was by prefixing *c*, and not by a repetition of  $\kappa$ , that the doubling was effected. Thus, *acknowledge*, which is only a compound of the particle *a* with *knowledge*, the *c* expressing the reverberation of the  $\kappa$ -sound. So also in *lack, crack, Jack*, and the old-fashioned spellings of *politick, æsthetick*,  $\kappa\kappa$  may be taken as equivalent to  $\kappa\kappa$ .

140. In the *G* we must suppose that a distinction already existed in Saxon utterance between the *G* which in English became *y*, as *ge, ye*; *gear, year*; *geard, yard*; *gearo, yare*; *git, yet*; *græg, gray*; *dag, day*; or which disappeared, as *lufige, I love*; and those cases in which it stood before *a, o, u*, or a consonant, as *grim, great, green, God, good, gold, gang*. This is the true medial of the guttural series. In some instances there has been a vacillation between *G* and *y*:

thus the Saxon *gifan* is in Chaucer *yeve*, but we have long ago recovered the G, and write *give*. In the case of *gate*, Saxon *geat*, there is a form *yate* of provincial celebrity.

Such changes were a source of copiousness to the language, which often retained the old form in some special use while adopting the new generally. Thus *græg* became *gray* for general purposes, but as designating a grasshopper it became *grig*.

CH represents a sound which we find in the Swedish *x* when it is followed by a soft vowel: thus the initial *x* of Swedish *Kyrka* has the sound of *ch* in our *church*. This is a strong argument for supposing that this peculiar sound may be older than the Conquest, although there was no distinct way of writing it.

141. J is the consonant that has grown out of the vowel I. Now the process of making *i* into a consonant would seem to result most naturally in the product of the *y*-sound. And this was the native English tendency, as may appear by such an instance as the following:—

‘When the lorn damsel, with a frantic screech,  
Cries, “Help *kyind* Heaven!”’—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

This is native to English in common with German, Danish, and Swedish, in which languages *j* means the same as our *y*; thus *jule*, above, 8, is pronounced as our *yule*. That we had this tendency is further exemplified by the case of *yew*, 131.

• But we had not developed any extensive consonantal use of *i* when one was imported from France, along with such words as *iangler*, *iealous*, *iest*, *iewel*, *ioin*, *iolly*, *iourney*, *ioust*, *ioy*, *iudge*, *Iuly*, *iustice*. The sound of this French *j* is a palato-guttural, like that of *g* in *gist*. It is in its whole character a French product, although at certain points it admits of comparison with other Romanesque languages.

Thus we may compare its sound with the sound in certain analogous positions in Italian :—

| FRENCH. | ITALIAN. | LATIN.  |
|---------|----------|---------|
| Jean    | Giovanni | Ioannes |
| majeur  | maggior  | maior   |

But when we consider the whole case, namely, the character, the sound, the range of application, we find that the French *j* is distinctly French, and has been adopted in England, and thus our language is estranged in this respect from German and our other national relatives. A reflex effect of this our consonantal *j* has been that we have lent it to the Latin language in our printed books, and in our pronunciation. Such words as *maior*, *peior*, *iuvare*, *iam*, *iuncus*, *huius*, *eius*, we have printed and pronounced *major*, *pejor*, *juvare*, *jam*, *juncus*, *hujus*, *ejus*. We have been wrong in attributing a sibilant guttural *j* to the Latin language. The best Latin scholars are now correcting this. In Professor Conington's *Vergil* I do not see a *j*. As a sample of his text I quote the two opening lines of the most famous of Eclogues :—

‘Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus !  
Non omnes arbusta iuvant, humilesque myricae.’

As a character distinct from *i*, this letter dates from the seventeenth century.

**142.** *H* has already been spoken of above as a spirant. But it must have mention here as a guttural, being in fact the old aspirate of the guttural series, from which it has declined in utterance, so as to be now but a mere breathing. Yet it represents the guttural-aspirate in many English words for the purposes of comparative philology. Thus Latin *canis* is English *hound*, according to Grimm's Law.

*Q* is a Latin letter, which was not recognised in English till the close of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth

century. Previous to this the Anglo-Saxon writers had done very well without it; having expressed the sound of *qu* by the letters *cw*; as *cwalm*, qualm, pestilence, death; *cwæð*, quoth; *cwen*, queen; *cwic*, quick. At first the *qu* was only admitted in writing Latin or French words, while *cw* kept its place in native words. Among the earliest Latin or French words beginning with *qu* which were adopted in English are *quart*, *quarter*, *quarterne*, prison, *quarrel*, *quarry*, *quire*, *quill* from *quietus*, quiet. This is the position which *q* holds at this day in the Dutch language; it is used for spelling certain Latin words, while *kw* is used for the same sound in the words of native origin. In English, on the contrary, the *qu* very soon prevailed even in the home-born words; and before the close of the thirteenth century we find *quake*, *qualm*, *queen*, *quell*, *quick*, besides some other less common words.

X has two powers: one its original value, *ks*; and the other *gs*, a development common to English and French. It sounds as *gs* when the syllable following the *x* is open and accented, as *exhaust*, *exalt*, *exotic*; in other cases it has the original value of *ks*. This distinction is, however, questioned; and the decision of it is all the more difficult, as we may not trust the report of our own organs in delicate points of pronunciation. Our utterance is warped the moment we set ourselves to observe and examine it.

## CHAPTER II.

### SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION.

145. THE spelling of our language has admitted a succession of changes from the earliest times to the present day. We now call our orthography fixed : but perhaps the next generation will detect some changes that have taken place in our time. Orthography is always in the rear of pronunciation, and this distance is continually increasing. As a language grows old, it more and more tends towards being governed by precedent. We spell words as we have been taught to spell them. The more literature is addressed to the eye, the more that organ is humoured, and the ear is less and less considered. A settled orthography is a habit of spelling which rarely admits of modification, and tends towards a state of absolute immutability.

When a language has become literary, its orthography has already begun to be fixed. The varieties of spelling which have taken place from the fourteenth century until now, may appear considerable to those who have only glanced at old books ; but in reality they are very limited. A few slight variations, often repeated, will make a great difference in the legibility of a page, to the eye that is unaccustomed to such variations. It might be thought that the idea of orthography was a modern affair, and that the spelling of our early writers was chaotic and unstudied. But this would be a great mistake.



146. The poet of the *Ormulum* (1215) earnestly begs that in future copies of his work, respect may be had to his orthography. The passage has been quoted and translated above, 50.

Chaucer also, in the closing stanzas of his *Troilus and Creseide*, begs that no one will 'miswrite' his little book, by which he means that no one should deviate from his orthography.

'Go, little booke, go my, little tragedie

And for there is so great diverse  
In English, and in writing of our tong,  
So pray I to God, that none miswrite thee,  
Ne the mis-metre, for defaut of tong :  
And redd wherso thou be or eles song,  
That thou be understand,' &c.

It was not for want of interest in orthography that so great diversity continued to exist, but it was from the obstacles which naturally delayed a common understanding on 'such a point. A standard was, however, set up in the fifteenth century, or at furthest in the sixteenth, by the masters of the Printing-press. It was the Press that determined our orthography. This may easily be discerned by the fact that whereas private letters continue for a long time to exhibit all the old diversity of spelling, the Bible of 1611, and the First Folio of Shakspeare (1623) are substantially in the orthography which is now prevalent and established.

147. If any one will be at the trouble to compare the following verses from the Bible of 1611 with our present Bible, he will see that the variation is not so great as at first sight appears.

*Diuers opinions of him among the people. The Pharisees are angry that their officers tooke him not, & c bide with Nicodemus for taking his part.*

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Iesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come vnto me, and drinke.

38 He that beleueeth on me, as the Scripture hath saide, out of his belly shall flow riuers of liuing water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that beleuee on him should receiue. For the holy Ghost was not yet *giuen*, because that Iesus was not yet glorified.)

40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, saide, Of a trueth this is the Prophet.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the Scripture saide, that Christ commeth of the seede of David, and out of the towne of Bethlehem, where David was?

43 So there was a diuision among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would haue taken him, but no man layed hands on him.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chiefe Priests and Pharises, and they said vnto them, Why haue ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Neuer man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceiued?

48 Haue any of the rulers, or of the Pharises beleueed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the Law, are cursed.

50 Nicodemus saith vnto them, (He that came to Iesus by night, being one of them.)

51 Doth our Law iudge any man before it heare him, & know what he doth?

52 They answered, and said vnto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and looke: for out of Galilee ariseth no Prophet.

53 And euery man went vnto his owne house.

148. A large part of the strange effect which this specimen has to the modern eye is due to something which is distinct from spelling—namely, to a change of form in certain characters. The modern distinction of *j* the consonant from *i* the vowel was not yet known. The *v* was not practically distinguished from the *u*. Instead of *judge* we see *iudge*; and instead of *deceived* it is *deceiued*. These may come under the notion of orthography, but they cannot be called diversities of spelling. To these have to be added a few instances of *e* final, which have since been disused. Also a few more capital letters. Such are the chief elements to which the strange aspect is due. The only real differences in this piece from our present use, are *beleuee*, *layed* (for *laid*), *commeth*, *trueth*.

Let us glance at a few of the changes which have produced the present settlement. For this purpose we must look back to the last great disturbance, that is to say, to the Conquest and its sequel. At that time there had been a fixed orthography for a hundred years; hardly less fixed than ours now is, after four centuries of printing. We must remember that the Press is a sort of dictator in orthography. If we were to judge of present English orthography by a collection of manuscripts of the day, it would be a different thing from judging of it by printed books. For a manuscript literature, that of the last hundred years of the Saxon period is singularly orthographical.

149. The clashing of dialects in the transition period, and the French influence, combined to raise up a new sort of spelling in the place of the old. Even the Saxon words could not escape the new influence. A very large proportion of the words beginning with *c* were now spelt either with *k* or with *ch*.

Examples of a Saxon *c* turned into *k* :—

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Cæg, key</i>     | <i>Cnawan, know</i>  |
| <i>Cene, keen</i>   | <i>Cnedan, knead</i> |
| <i>Ceol, keel</i>   | <i>Cneow, knee</i>   |
| <i>Cent, Kent</i>   | <i>Cniht, knight</i> |
| <i>Cepan, keep</i>  | <i>Cyð, kyth</i>     |
| <i>Cnapa, knave</i> | <i>Cyn, kin</i>      |

Examples of Saxon words beginning with *c*, which in modern English have taken *ch* instead of *c* :—

|                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Ceafu, chaff</i>     | <i>Cidan, chide</i>    |
| <i>Ceaster, Cbester</i> | <i>Cinne, chin</i>     |
| <i>Ceorl, churl</i>     | <i>Circe, church</i>   |
| <i>Ceosan, cboose</i>   | <i>Cyle, chill</i>     |
| <i>Cild, child</i>      | <i>Cypman, chapman</i> |

In the close of words also *ch* has taken the place of the Saxon *c* (or sometimes *cc*) as in *church* (*cyrice*), *speech* (*spæc*), *reach* (*ræcan*), *teach* (*tæcan*), and sometimes it has taken the form *tch* as in *latch* (*læccan*), *thatch* (*þæc*), *match*

(*gemæcca*), *watch* (*wac*), *wretch* (*wreccea*). This *-tch* extended at one time beyond its present bounds; thus in Spenser's *Faery Queene*, i. 2. 21, we read *riich* for 'rich.' The quaint old Scottish grammarian, Alexander Hume, who was 'Scolemaester of Bath' in 1592, speaks contemptuously of this *ch* and *tch* development of our pronunciation, calling it 'an Italian chirt.'

'With c we spil the aspiration, turning it into an Italian chirt; as, charite, cherrie, of quhilk hereafter. . . . This consonant, evin quher in the original it hes the awne sound, we turn it into the chirt we spak of, quhilk indeed can be symbolized with none, neither greek nor latin letteres; as from cano, chant; from canon, chanon<sup>1</sup>; from castus, chast; &c.' *Of the Orthographie of the Britan Tongue*, by Alexander Hume (Early English Text Society, 1865), pp. 13, 14.

150. It is a point of much interest and of some uncertainty, how the *ch* is to be accounted for in this class of examples. Was the change only in the spelling, and had these words been pronounced with the *ch* sound even while they were written with the *c*? That this was not the case universally the Scotch form *Kirk* is a sufficient evidence. But may it have been so partially—may the chirt have been in the southern and western pronunciation? Something of this sort may be seen at present in Scandinavia. The Swedish and Danish languages have initial *κ* in common in a large number of words. The Danish *κ* has no chirt anywhere; but the Swedish *κ* is pronounced as *ch* when it is followed by certain vowels. The Danish word for *church* is *kirke*; the Swedish word is *kyrka*. In the former case the *κ*-initial is pronounced as in Scotland; in the latter it sounds like the first consonant in the English *church*. A like division of pronunciation may possibly have existed in this island before the Conquest. Or the chirt may have been still more partial than this; it may

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<sup>1</sup> This indicates a former pronunciation of *canon* more like the French *canoine*

have had but an obscure and disowned existence (like the *sh* sound as a substitute for the *ch* in Germany); and the French influence may have fostered it by a natural affinity, and given it a permanent place in the English language.

151. Analogous to the use of *t* before the *ch* (anciently *c*) is the putting a *d* before an ancient *g*. Thus we have the forms *hedge*, A. S. *hege*; *wedge*, A. S. *wecg*; *ridge*, A. S. *rig*. The more classical Anglo-Saxon form is *hrycg*, but this is not the form which would tend to produce *ridge*. On the contrary, it has produced the modern form *rick*, a synonym for a stack of corn or hay.

In the word *knowledge* the same mode of orthography is applied by a false analogy; and *oblidge* has been recalled to simplicity by reference to its original, the French *obliger*.

152. Saxon words beginning in *sc* are in modern English spelt *sh*: e. g.—

|                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Scadu, <i>shade</i>   | Sceap, <i>sheep</i>  |
| Sceaf, <i>sheaf</i>   | Scearp, <i>sharp</i> |
| Sceaft, <i>shaft</i>  | Scel, <i>shell</i>   |
| Sceal, <i>shall</i>   | Sceort, <i>short</i> |
| Sceamu, <i>shame</i>  | Sceo, <i>shoe</i>    |
| Sceanca, <i>shank</i> | Scild, <i>shield</i> |

In some words, however, the Saxon *sc* is preserved, as *scale* (of a balance), *scar*, *score*, *scoi*, *scrub*, and *scypen*, cattle-shed. In some cases it is now written *sk* as in *skin*, *skittle*, *skulk*. In one instance at least it is written *sch* where nothing but the simply *sc* is heard, as *school*.

The English is more sibilant than the Anglo-Saxon was, and the change of *sc* to *sh* has contributed to this effect. The sibilancy of our language is a European proverb. Undoubtedly our whole stock is sibilant, and the Mæso-Gothic itself most of all. The Saxon was one of the least sibilant of the family, as the lists above (10 and 12) sufficiently indicate. Our modern sibilancy has been due entirely to

French contact. Besides our native sibilants, which had been reduced below average proportions, we accepted all those of the French, which were many. That language is eminently sibilant now to the eye, though not to the ear. It is by the silence of their final *s* that our old neighbour is in a position to smile at the susurrations of the English language. Apart from the French influence, we were less sibilant than either the French or the German.

153. One of the earliest changes was the quiescence of the old guttural-aspirate *h*. This produced more than one set of modifications in spelling.

The habit of writing *wh* instead of the old *hw* was one of these. It seems that the decaying sound of the guttural gave the *w*-sound more prominence to the ear, and that accordingly the *w* was put before the *h* in writing. This alteration had the more effect on the appearance of the language, because many of the words so spelt are among the commonest and most frequently recurring. The following are some of the more conspicuous examples:—

|                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Hwa, who</i>             | <i>Hwylc, which</i>           |
| <i>Hwæs, whose</i>          | <i>Hweol, wheel</i>           |
| <i>Hwæl, whale</i>          | <i>Hwi, why</i>               |
| <i>Hwær, where</i>          | <i>Hwil, while</i>            |
| <i>Hwæt, what</i>           | <i>Hwisperung, whispering</i> |
| <i>Hwæt-stan, whetstone</i> | <i>Hwistlere, whistler</i>    |
| <i>Hwæte, wheat</i>         | <i>Hwit, white</i>            |

The modern result is this, that the syllable which was pronounced from the throat (guttural), is now pronounced mainly on the lips (aspirate-labial). The Scotch retained the guttural much longer; and the traces of it are still audible in Scotland. And they wrote as well as pronounced gutturally: thus, *quha, quhilk, quhat*. Alexander Hume thus recounts a dispute he had with some Southrons on the point:—

'To clere this point, and alsoe to reform an error bred in the south, and now usurped be our ignorant printeres, I wil tel quhat besel my self quhen I was in the south with a special gud frende of myne. Ther rease, upon sum accident, quhither *qubo*, *quben*, *qubat*, etc., should be symbolised with *q* or *w*, a hoat disputation betuene him and me. After manie conflicties (for we oft encountered), we met be chance, in the citie of Baeth, with a Doctour of divinitie of both our acquaintance. He invited us to denner. At table my antagonist, to bring the question on foot amangs his awn condisciples, began that I was becum an heretick, and the doctour spering how, answered that 'I denied *qubo* to be spelled with a *w*, but with *qu*.

Be quhat reason? quod the doctour. Here, I beginning to lay my grundes of labial, dental, and guttural soundes and symboles, he snapped me on this hand and he on that, that the doctour had mikle a doe to win me roome for a syllogisme. Then (said I) a labial letter can not symboliz a guttural syllab. But *w* is a labial letter, *qubo* a guttural sound. And therfoer *w* can not symboliz *qubo*, nor noe syllab of that nature. Here the doctour staying them again (for al barked at ones), the proposition, said he, I understand; the assumption is Scottish, and the conclusion false. Quherat al laughed, as if I had bene dryven from all replye, and I fretted to see a frivolouse jest goe for a solid ansuer.' *Of the Orthographie, &c.*, p. 18.

154. To the same cause must be attributed the motive for changing the spelling of *liht*, *miht*, *niht*, *siht*, &c., to *light*, *might*, *night*, *sight*.

Probably the *g* was prefixed to the *h* in order to insist on the *h* being uttered as a guttural. If so, it has failed. The guttural writing remains as a historical monument, but the sound is no longer heard except in Scotland and the conterminous parts of England.

After it became quiescent, it was apt to be employed carelessly or arbitrarily. For example, Spenser wrote the adjective *white* in the following unrecognisable manner, *whight*.

'His Belphebe was clad  
All in a silken camus lilly whight.'

*Faery Queene*, ii. 3. 26.

In Raleigh's letters we repeatedly find *wright* write; so also *spright* was written instead of *sprite*; and although it is now obsolete, yet its derivative *sprightly* is still in use. *Spight* for *spite*, in Spenser, quoted below (158), may seem to have more right to the guttural, as it is from *despectare*.

155. The case of *ugh* must be noticed apart. Sometimes it sounds like simple *u* or *w*; as in *plough*, *through*, *daughter*, *slaughter*. In other cases it sounds like *f*; as *cough*, *enough*, *rough*, *laughter*. In *though* it is quiescent. The same variety occurs in local and family names. In some parts of England the name *Waugh* is pronounced as *Waw*, and in others as *Waff*.

It is a mistake to say as is usually said<sup>1</sup>, that these are various uses of *gh*. There is no variety in the use of this digraph, for it is uniformly silent<sup>2</sup>. In the above instances, it is the *u* which is variously treated, being rendered as a vowel in some cases, and as a consonant equivalent to *f* in others. In like manner the *u* in *lieutenant* is rendered as *f*, and we say 'leftenant.' This treatment of the *u* has had a wider range than now. Indeed it would seem that there is hardly any of these *ugh* words, that has not had the *f* sound at some time or in some locality. The 'Northern Farmer' says *thruf* for *through*; and in Mrs. Trimmer's *Robins*, chap. vi., *though* receives a like treatment; for Joe the gardener says, 'No, Miss Harriet; but I have something to tell you that will please you as much as *tho'f* I had<sup>3</sup>.'

The following quotation from Surrey seems to indicate that *taught* in his time might be pronounced as 'toft':—

'Farewell I thou hast me taught,  
To think me not the first  
That love hath set aloft,  
And casten in the dust.'

At Ilkley, near Leeds, *slaughter* may be heard pronounced

<sup>1</sup> And as it stood in my first edition. I am indebted for the true explanation to Mr. Danby P. Fry.

<sup>2</sup> I exclude the *gh* in *gbost*, *gberkin*, as being different in origin.

<sup>3</sup> This will not be found in all editions, because such rude things are deemed objectionable by modern educationists; and Mrs. Trimmer is expurgated.



like *laughter*; and John Bunyan could pronounce *daughter* as 'dafter':—

'Despondency, good man, is coming after,  
An so is also Much-afraid, his daughter.'

There is one word of this orthography whose pronunciation is not yet uniformly established (in the public reading of Scripture), and that is the word *draught*. The colloquial pronunciation is now 'draft,' but in Dryden we find the other sound:—

'Better to hunt the fields for health unbought,  
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught.'

156. If we now leave the Saxon and notice the French words that entered largely into our language in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there is this general observation to be made concerning them:—They were at first pronounced as French words; and although the original pronunciation was soon impaired, yet a trace of their native sound followed them for a long time, just as happens in like cases in our own day. The French accentuation would remain after every other tinge of their origin had faded out. In course of time they were so completely familiarised that their origin was lost sight of, and then they insensibly slid into an English pronunciation. The spelling would sometimes follow all these changes, but in other cases the habit of writing was too strongly fixed.

Thus the French word *honneur* has appeared in English as *honure* (Layamon), and then as *honour* in Chaucer, and in both cases accented after the French manner on the last syllable. But now that the accent has moved forward to the first syllable, there is a tendency to spell accordingly.

The adjective *honourable* is anglicised in the titular use of the word, when it is written *Honorable*; and there are some authors who now omit the *u* in the substantive and adjective

alike, and upon all occasions. The American writers are conspicuous for their disposition to reject these traces of early French influence.

157. In reading early English poets, if we wish to catch the music as well as the sense, we must bear in mind the difference of pronunciation. That difference is not in all cases easy to seize and define, but the case of words from the French is exceedingly clear.

The tendency of that nation is the reverse of ours in the matter of accentuation. They throw the accent often on the close of a word; we always try to get it as near the beginning as possible. There is a large body of French words in our language which have at length yielded to the influences by which they are surrounded, and have come to be pronounced as English-born words. The same words were for centuries accented in the French manner, and these are especially the ones we ought to be familiar with, if we would wish not to stumble at the rhythm of our early poets.

Chaucer has

|          |         |           |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| aventüre | for our | advénture |
| contrée  | „       | countrý   |
| coráge   | „       | cóurage   |
| fortüne  | „       | fórtune   |
| labouüre | „       | lábour    |
| langáge  | „       | lánquage  |
| mariáge  | „       | márrriage |
| natüre   | „       | nátüre    |
| resón    | „       | reáson.   |
| vertúe   | „       | vírtue    |
| viáge    | „       | vóyage    |
| viságe   | „       | vísage    |

Long after Chaucer did this French influence continue to be felt in our language. Even so late as Milton considerable traces of it are found in his rhythms. For example, he accents *aspect* on the last syllable, as in *Paradise Lost*, vi. 450:—

‘ His words here ended, but his meek aspéct  
Silent yet spake, and breath’d immortal love.’

The word *contest* is accentuated by Milton as *contést*.  
*Paradise Lost*, iv. 872 :—

‘Not likely to part hence without *contést*.’

Again, in the last line of the Ninth Book :—

‘And of their vain *contést* appeared no end.’

158. The case of the word *contrary* is interesting, especially as we are told in Walker’s *Pronouncing Dictionary*, that ‘the accent of this word is invariably placed on the first syllable by all correct speakers, and as constantly removed to the second by the illiterate and vulgar.’ These are rather hard terms to apply to the really time-honoured and classical pronunciation of *contráry*; but yet Walker doubtless expressed the current judgment of the polite society of his and of our day.

We find it in Shakspeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 5 :—

‘You must *contráry* me, marry ‘tis time.’

And Spenser, *Faery Queene*, ii. 2. 24, where I will quote the whole stave for the sake of its beauty :—

‘As a tall ship tóssed in troublous seas  
(Whom raging windes, threatning to make the pray  
Of the rough rockes, doe diversly disease)  
Meetes two *contrárie* billowes by the way,  
That her on either side doe sore assay,  
And boast to swallow her in greedy grave;  
Shee, scorning both their spights, does make wide way,  
And, with her brest breaking the fomy wave,  
Does ride on both their backs, and faire herself doth save.’

And Milton in *Samson Agonistes*, 972 :—

‘Fame, if not double-fac’d, is double-mouth’d,  
And with *contráry* blast proclaims most deeds.’

159. Although the disposition of our language is to throw the accent back, yet we are far from having divested our-

selves of words accented on the last syllable. There are a certain number of cases in which this constitutes a useful distinction, when the same word acts two parts. Such is the case of *humáne* and *húman*; of *augúst* and the month of *Aúgust*, which is in fact the selfsame word. Sometimes the accent marks the distinction between the verb and the noun: thus we say to *rebel*, to *recórd*; but a *rébel*, a *récord*. When the lawyers speak of a '*recórd*' (substantively), they merely preserve the original French pronunciation, and thereby remind us that the distinction last indicated is a pure English invention. We have many borrowed words to which we have given a domestic character by setting them to a music of our own.

But independently of this set of words, in which the accent on the last syllable is of manifest utility, there are others naturally accented in the same manner, in which there seems to be no disposition to introduce a change. Examples;—*polite, urbane, jocose, divine, complete*.

To these Romance examples may be added some of pure Saxon, e. g. all the disyllabic compounds beginning with *be-*:—*become, before, beget; behead, below, bequeathe, bequest, be-think, beware, beyond*. The emphasis, which naturally rests on the last, has never been transferred by fashion to the first. And that is because the subsidiariness of the *be-* has never been lost sight of. The English disyllables (from every source) which are now accented on the last syllable amount to the number of 1635, as I know from a manuscript list of them which I have, in the handwriting of a friend.

160. In the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, it was a trick and fashion of the times to lengthen words by the addition of an *e*, and also to double the consonants. These are the characteristic features of the spelling with

which we are familiar in Spenser, who is edited in the orthography of his time. In the following passage the word *wones*, dwells, is written *wonnes* :—

‘For now the best and noblest Knight alive  
Prince Arthur is, that wonnes in Faerie lond.’

*Faery Queene*, ii. 3. 18.

In the same way he writes *besprinckled*, *himselſe*, *thanklesse*, *blincked*, *dogge*, *lincked*, *horne*, *cleare*, *ecchoed*, *againē*.

‘At last they heard a horne that shrilled cleare  
Throughout the wood that ecchoed againe.’ *Ib.* 20.

A great number of these final *e*'s have been abolished, others have been utilised, as observed in 163; but these fashions mostly leave their traces in hereditary relics. Such is the *e* at the end of *therefore*, which has no use as expressive of sound, and which exerts a delusive effect on the sense, making the word look as if it were a compound of *forē*, like *before*, instead of with *for*, which is the fact; and for this reason some American books now print *therefor*, 193.

161. So with reference to the doubling of the *k* by *ck*. Many of these remained to a late date; and there are some few archaisms of this sort which have only just been disused. Such are *poetick*, *ascetick*, *politick*, *catholick*, instead of *poetic*, *ascetic*, *politic*, *catholic*. This was the constant orthography of Dr. Johnson. ‘The next year (1713), in which *Cato* came upon the stage, was the grand *climacterick* of Addison’s reputation.’ When such exuberances are dismissed, it is quite usual to make an exception in favour of Proper names. There are very good and practical reasons why these should affect a spelling somewhat removed from the common habits of the language, and accordingly we find that almost every discarded fashion of spelling lives on somewhere in Proper names. The orthography of *Frederick* has not been re-

formed, and the *ck* holds its ground advantageously against the timidly advancing fashion of writing *Frederic*.

162. To the same period belongs the practice of writing double *l* at the end of such words as *celestiall*, *mortall*, *faithfull*, *eternall*, *counsell*, *naturall*, *unequall*, *wakefull*, *cruell* : also in such words as *lilly*, 154.

It is a relic of this fashion that we still continue to write *till*, *all*, *full*, instead of *til*, *al*, *ful*, which were the forms of these words in Saxon.

Spenser has an inclination to *c* for *s* and *y* for *i*, thus *bace desyre* (*Faery Queene*, ii. 3. 23) for *base desire*.

The vacillation between *c* and *s* terminated discriminatively in a few instances. Thus we have *prophecy* the verb and *prophecy* the noun, to *practise* and a *practice*. Less established, but often observed, is the differentiation of *license* the verb from *licence* the substantive, as—

‘Licence they mean when they cry Liberty.’

John Milton; *Sonnet* xii. 11; ed. Tonson, 1725.

163. In the case of the *e*-subscript, that which had originally been nothing more than a trick or fashion of the times, came to have a definite signification assigned to it. In the fifteenth century it was a mere Frenchism, a fashion and nothing more. But in the sixteenth century it came to be regarded as a grammatical sign that the proper vowel of the syllable was long<sup>1</sup>. Against this orthographical idiom the Scotch grammarian, Alexander Hume, who dedicated his book to King James I, stoutly protested:—

‘We use alsoe, almost at the end of everie word, to wryte an idle *e*. This sum defend not to be idle, because it affectes the voual before the consonant, the sound quherof many tymes alters the signification; as, *bop* is *altero*

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<sup>1</sup> To indicate the subservient use of this letter, I have (for want of a better expression) borrowed from a somewhat analogous thing in Greek grammar the term *e-subscript*.

*tantum pede saltare*; *bope* is *sperare*: *fir*, *abies*; *fyre*, *ignis*: a *fin*, *pinna*; *fine*, *probatus*: *bid*, *jubere*; *bide*, *manere*: with many *moe*. It is true that the sound of the vowl befoer the consonant many tymes doth change the signification; but it is as untrue that the vowl *e* behind the consonant doth change the sound of the vowl before it. A vowl devyded from a vowl be a consonant can be noe possible means return thorough the consonant into the former vowl. Consonantes betuene vouales are lyke partitions walles betuen roomes. Nothing can change the sound of a vowl but an other vowl coalescing with it into one sound. . . . To illustrat this be the same exemples, *saltare* is to *boþ*; *sperare* is to *hoep*: *abiesis fir*; *ignis fyr*; or, if you wil, *fier*: *jubere* is *bid*; *manere* *byd* or *bied*.—*Of the Orthographie*, &c., p. 21.

164. The fifteenth century is the period in which we adopted the French combination *gu* to express nothing more than the *g*-sound before *e* or *i*. Chaucer has *guerdon*, which is a French word; but he did not apply this spelling to words of English origin, such as, *guess*, *guest*, *guild*, *guilt*. These in Chaucer are written without the *u*.

Mr. Toulmin Smith spells *gild* throughout his book entitled *English Gilds*. In *language* we have an abnormal French spelling, which lost its footing with them, but established itself with us. Here the *u* has acquired a consonantal value as a consequence of the orthography. In Chaucer it is *langage*, but in the Promptorium (1440) we read 'Langage or langage.' 170.

165. In the sixteenth century there appeared a fashion of writing certain words with initial *sc*- which before had simple *s*-. It was merely a way of writing the words, and was without any significance as to the sound. Hence the forms *scent*, *scite*, *scituation*: and Saxon *sīðe* became *scythe*. It probably sprang from the analogy of such Latin forms as *scene*, *science*, *sceptre*. These cases are to be distinguished from those of 152.

*Scent* is from the Latin *sentire*, French *sentir*, and is written *sent* in Spenser, *Faery Queene*, i. 1. 53.

*Scite* seems to be returning to its natural orthography of

*sile*, as being derived from the Latin *situs*; and we once more write it as did Spenser and Ben Jonson. But there are still persons of authority who adhere to the seventeenth-century practice—the practice of Fuller, Burnet, and Drayton.

166. In the sixteenth century there was a great disposition to prefix a *w* before certain words beginning with an *h* or with an *r*. This seems to have been due to association. There existed of old in the language a group of words beginning with *wh* and *wr*; such as, *whale*, *wharf*, *what*, *wheat*, *wheel*, *when*, *where*, *which*, *who*, *whither*, *wrath*, *wreak*, *wrestle*, *wretch*, *wright*, *wrist*, *write*, *wrong*,—all familiar words, and some of them words of the first necessity. The contagion of these examples spread to words beginning with *h* or *r* simple, and the movement was perhaps aided in some measure by the desire to reassert the languishing gutturalism of *h* and (we may add) of *r*.

This was the means of engendering some strange forms of orthography, which either became speedily extinct or maintained an obscure existence. For example, *whot* is found instead of *hot*, as *red-whot*, *Faery Queene*, iv. 5. 44; *whome*, instead of *home*; *wrote* instead of *root*. In Shakespeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3. 23, *wrest* most probably belongs here, being an Elizabethan form of *rest*. In Sir W. Raleigh's Letters we find *wrediness*, readiness. The form *wrapt*, as quoted in 199, belongs here. Modern writers seem to have decided for *rapt*: this is the only form in Tennyson, who has *wrapt* only in such phrases as 'wrapt in a cloak.' This is an instance in which it may be doubted whether the word does not lose a certain poetic haze by being so rigidly etymologised. In Dean Milman's *History of the Jews*, ed. 1868, it stands, 'Elijah had been wrapt to heaven in a car of fire.'



167. By this process was formed the vexed word *wretchlessness* in the seventeenth Article. To understand this word, we have only to look at it when divested of its initial *w*, as *retchlessness*; and then, according to principles already defined, to remember that an ancient Saxon *c* at the end of a syllable commonly developed into *tch*; and in this way we get back to the verb to *reck*, Anglo-Saxon *recan*, to care for. So that *retch-less-ness* is equivalent to care-nought-state of mind, that is to say, it is much the same thing as 'desperation.' The prefixed *w* has in this instance proved fatal to the word. The *tch* form of this root has fallen out of use. Most probably the prefixing of this *w* has extinguished it. For it had the effect of creating a confusion between this word and *wretch*, a word totally distinct, and this is one of the greatest causes of words dying out, when they clash with others and promote confusion. We retain the verb to *reck*, and also *reckless* and *recklessness*, which means the same as *wretchlessness*.

The Bible-translator, Myles Coverdale<sup>1</sup> spelt *raught* (the preterite of *reach*, and equivalent of our *reached*) with a *w*. Speaking of Adam stretching forth his hand to pick the forbidden fruit, he says, 'he *wrought* life and died the death.' That is to say, he *raught*, or *snatched* at, life.

But besides these obscure forms, one at least sprang up under the same influence, which has retained a place in standard English. The form *whole* stood for *hole* or *hale*, which sense it bears in the English New Testament, though it has since run off from the sense of *hale*, sound (integer), into that of complete (totus). In this case, the language has been accidentally enriched. A new word has been introduced, and one which has made for itself a

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<sup>1</sup> *Writings of Myles Coverdale*, Parker Society, *The Old Faith*, p. 17.

place of the first importance in the language. For the expression *the whole* has obtained pronominal value in English.

168. This prevalence of the initial *w* is perhaps in some measure to be traced to an influence from the western counties. At any rate, it is there that we still observe an excess of the same tendency. One of the most remarkable instances of this change (remarkable because it was made in the pronunciation only and not in the writing of the word) is that of the numeral ONE. It used to be pronounced as written, very like the preposition *on*, a sound naturally derived from its original form in the Saxon numeral *ĀN*. But it has now long been pronounced as *wun* or *won* (in Devonshire *wonn*), and this change may with probability be placed at the close of the sixteenth century. It was apparently a west-country habit which got into standard English. In Somersetshire may be heard 'the *wonn* en the wother' for 'the one and the other.' In the eastern parts of England, and especially in London, it is well-known vernacular to say *un*, commonly written '*un*', as if a *w* had been elided; e. g. 'a good '*un*.' In *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2. 80, it is plainly pronounced *on* or *oon*.

One of the features of the Dorset dialect, as exhibited in the poems of the Rev. William Barnes, is the broad use of this initial *w*, both in the first numeral and in other words, such as *woak* for oak, *wold* for old, *woats* for oats.

'John Bloom he wer a jolly soul,  
A grinder o' the best o' meal,  
Beside a river that did roll,  
Vrom week to week, to'push his wheel.  
His flour were all a-meide o' wheat,  
An' fit vor bread that vo'k mid eat;  
Vor he would starve avore he'd cheat.  
"Tis pure," woone woman cried;  
"Ay, sure," woone mwore replied;  
"You'll vind it nice. Buy woonce, buy twice."  
Cried worthy Bloom the miller.'

The same worthy miller sitting in his oaken chair is described as

‘A-zittén in his cheäir o’ woak.’

In Tyndale’s New Testament, Matt. xviii. 16, it seems as if *won* in the edition of 1526 had slipped in by oversight, for it is usually spelt *oon* in that book; but in 1534 it has become *one*. Here is a case in which the stray exception is the most genuine product.

169. But while we point to the western counties as the possible source of this feature, we must not overlook the fact that in Yorkshire, and generally throughout the North, *one* is pronounced *wonn*, and oats are called *wuts*, as distinctly as in Gloucestershire and the West of England. Whatever regions we may trace it to, we must regard this w with particular interest as being a creation of the English speech-genius. To the Danish it is ungenial; they have dropped it in words where it is of ancient standing, and where we have it in common with the Germans, as in *week*, *wool*, *wolf*, *Woden*, *word*, which the Danes call *uge*, *uld*, *ulf*, *Odin*, *ord*.

The Germans do in fact write the w in these words, *Woche*, *Wolle*, *Wulf*. But they do not properly share with us our w, for they pronounce it as our v; at least it is so pronounced in the literary German. If, however, we listen to the voice of the people, we perceive great variation in Germany. In the southern parts they seem to approach very nearly to the sound of our w; and, according to Paulus Diaconus, the Lombards exaggerated this sound, for he says that they pronounced Wodan as Gwodan. Even in France we occasionally catch a complete w-sound, as in *aiguille*, *oui*, *Edouard*, *Longwy*. But with all this, it may still be safely said that they all leave us in the sole possession of our w, which is accordingly a distinct property and special birth-right of the English language.

170. The influence of association (166) explains many other peculiarities of our spelling. It was on this principle that the word *could* acquired its L. This word has no natural right to the L at all, being of the same root as *can*, and the second syllable in *uncouth*, viz. from the verb which in Saxon was written CUNNAN. In *would* and *should* the L is hereditary; but *could* acquired the L by mere force of association with them. And it seems probable that the silence of the L in all three of these words may be due to the example of *could*. The *coud* sound still kept its place after it was written *could*, and at length drew *would* and *should* over to the like pronunciation. In the poet Surrey and his contemporaries we find *would* and even *could* rhymed to *mould*; and thus we perceive that *could* might easily have acquired a pronunciation answering to its new spelling. The word *fault* used to be pronounced without the sound of L, but here orthography has proved stronger than tradition. In the *Deserted Village* it rhymes to *ought*:—

‘Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault.’

This is another instance in which we have dropped a French pronunciation for one of our own making, and in the making of which we have been led by the spelling.  
164.

171. Between spelling and pronunciation there is a mutual attraction, insomuch that when spelling no longer follows the pronunciation, but is hardened into orthography, the pronunciation begins to move towards the spelling. A familiar illustration of this may be found in the words *Derby*, *clerk*, in which the *er* sounds as *ar*, but which many persons, especially of that class which is beginning to claim educated rank, now pronounce literally. The pronunciation itself was

a good Parisian fashion in the fifteenth century. Villon, the French poet of that period, affords in his rhymes some illustrations of this. He rhymes *Robert*, *haubert*, with *pluspart*, *poupart*; *barre* with *terre*; *appert* with *part*.<sup>1</sup>

But it must have been much older than the time of Villon. In Chaucer, *Prologue* 391, we are not to suppose that *Dertemouthe* is to be pronounced as it was by the boy who in one of our great schools was the cause of hilarity to his class-fellows by calling that seaport *Dirty-mouth*. The whole word is a trisyllable in Chaucer; but the first syllable represents the same sound as *Dart* now does. The popular *sarmon*, sermon, is found in Chaucer. *Sarvant* and *sarvice* occur in Raleigh's letters. We pronounce *ar* in *serjeant*. Both forms are preserved in the case of *person* and *parson*: in *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 2. 78, the old editions are divided on this word. In Raleigh we find *parson* in the sense of 'person.' *Merchant* was originally a mere variety of spelling for *marchant*, as it is spelt in Chaucer, according to its French extraction, but the pronunciation has now adapted itself to the prevalent value of *er*.

172. There are other familiar instances in which we may trace the influence of orthography upon pronunciation. The generation which is now in the stage beyond middle life, are some of them able to remember when it was the correct thing to say *Lunnon*. At that time young people practised to say it, and studied to fortify themselves against the vulgarism of saying *Londoñ*, according to the literal pronunciation. At the same time *Sir John* was pronounced with the accent on *Sir*, in such a manner that it was liable to be mistaken for *surgeon*. This accentuation of 'Sir John' may be traced further back, however, even to Shakespeare, unless

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<sup>1</sup> *Œuvres complètes de François Villon*, ed. Jannet, p. xxiii.

our ears deceive us. 2 *Henry VI*, ii. 3. 13 :

‘Live in your country here in banishment,  
With Sir John Stanley in the Isle of Man.’

Also, 4. 77,

‘And Sir John Stanley is appointed now  
To take her with him to the Isle of Man.’

Compare Milton, Sonnet xi :

‘Thy age, like ours, O soul of Sir John Cheek,  
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,  
When thou taught’st Cambridge and King Edward Greek.’

173. The same generation said *poonish* for *punish* (a relic of the French *u* in *punir*); and when they spoke of a *joint* of mutton they called it *jinte* or *jeynt*. In some cases it approximated to the sound *jweyntle*, and this was heard in the more retired parts among country gentlemen. This is in fact the missing link between the *ei* or *eye* sound and the French diphthong *oi* or *oie*—in imitation of which the peculiarity originated. The French words *loi* and *joie* are sounded as *l’wa* and *j’wa*. When the French pronunciation had degenerated so far in such words as *join*, *joint*, that the *o* was taken no account of, and they were uttered as *jine*, *jinte*, a reaction set in, and recourse was had to the native English fashion of pronouncing the diphthong *oi*. Hence our present *join*, *joint*, do not always rhyme where they ought to rhyme and once did rhyme.

That beautiful verse in the 106th Psalm (New Version) is hardly producible in refined congregations, by reason of this change in its closing rhyme :—

‘O may I worthy prove to see  
Thy saints in full prosperity !  
That I the joyful choir may join,  
And count thy people’s triumph mine !’

174. The fashion has not yet quite passed away of pronouncing *Rome* as the word *room* is pronounced. This is an ancient pronunciation, as is well known from puns in

'Con. O lawfull let it be  
that I have roome with Rome to curse a while.'

*Winch.* Rome shall remedie this.  
*Warw.* Roame thither then.'

'Then followed the preparatory day-school, a school for girls and boys, to which he went with his sister Fanny, and which was in a place called Rome (pronounced Room) lane.'—John Forster, *Life of Charles Dickens*, ch. i. 1816-21 (1872).

To this group of waning and venerable sounds, which

were talismans of good breeding in their day, may be added the pronunciation of the plural verb *are* like the word *air*: but not without observing that, in this instance, it is the modern pronunciation that runs counter to orthography. The following quotation from Wordsworth, *Thoughts near the Residence of Burns*, exhibits it in rhyme with prayer, bear, share:—

‘But why to him confine the prayer,  
When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear  
On the frail heart the purest share  
With all that live?  
The best of what we do and are,  
Just God, forgive!’

176. Rarer are the instances in which the number of syllables has been effected by change of pronunciation. A celebrated example is the plural ‘aches,’ which is thus commented upon in *Curiosities of Literature*, by Isaac Disraeli:—

‘ACHES.—Swift’s own edition of “The City Shower” has “old a-ches throb.” Aches is two syllables, but modern printers, who had lost the right pronunciation, have aches as one syllable, and then, to complete the metre, have foisted in “aches *will* throb.” Thus what the poet and the linguist wish to preserve is altered, and finally lost.

A good example occurs in *Hudibras*, iii. 2. 407, where persons are mentioned who

“Can by their pangs and *aches* find  
All turns and changes of the wind.”

The rhythm here demands the dissyllable *a-ches*, as used by the older writers, Shakespeare particularly, who, in his *Tempest*, makes Prospero threaten Caliban

“If thou neglect’st, or dost unwillingly  
What I command, I’ll rack thee with old cramps;  
Fill all thy bones with *aches*; make thee roar  
That beasts shall tremble at the din.”

..

### *Some recent Diphthongs.*

177. We will devote the remainder of this chapter to the new English diphthongs: they are among the more conspicuous instances of that revolution in orthography which



has caused Saxon literature to look so uncouth and strange in its own native country.

AU. It resulted from our peculiar *ae* sound of *a* as described in the last chapter, that the English *a* was found unequal to represent the French *a*, and accordingly we see *au* put for it in many words, as *chaunt*, the old spelling for *chant*; *aunt* for *ante*; *haunt* from 'hanter'; *laund*, a frequent word in our early poetry, also written *lawnd*, from the French 'lande,' and which is still preserved in the *lawns* of our gardens. *Blaunche*; *haunch*; *paunch*, French 'panse'; *launch*, French 'lancer.' Also for Saxon *a*, as *hlahhan*, *laugh*.

And this representation of the 'a' by the English *au*, from Chaucer to Spenser, is an acknowledgment of the early incapacity of the English *a* to express that full 'a' sound.

178. OU. There was no such diphthong as this in Saxon, though it is common in what are now called 'Saxon' words. It was one of the French transformations. The Saxon *u* was changed for French *ou*, as in *iung*, *young*; *bruh*, *trough*; *ful* became *foul*; *butan* keeps its *u* in *but*, and changes it in *about*. Thus the Saxon *nehgebur* became *neighbour* in conformity to such terminations as *honour*, *favour*, which represented a French *-eur* and a Latin *-or*. In recent times there is a tendency to the spelling *honor*, *labor*, *neighbor*; at least in America.

This *ou* is sometimes present in sound when absent from the spelling. If we compare the words *move*, *prove*, with such words as *love*, *dove*, *shove*, we become aware that the former, though they have laid aside their French spelling from *mouvoir*, *prouver*, yet have retained their French sound notwithstanding.

179. OI. This is no Saxon diphthong, but Saxon words readily admitted it. It came from the French *oui* or *eui*, or even *ou*. The Saxon *sol* borrowed from the French *souil* a new

vocalisation, and hence the English *soil*. The French *feuill* a leaf, has given us *foil* in several technical uses; and from *fouler*, to tread down, we have the verb to *foil*. The Saxon *tilian* lives on in the verb to *till* the ground; while its French vocalisation has resulted in *toil*.

EO. This combination often meets the eye on the Saxon page, but it is rare in English, and the few cases in which it appears have no connection with the Saxon. Ben Jonson said, 'it is found but in three words in our tongue, *yeoman*, *people*, *jeopardy*; which were truer written *yéman*, *péple*, *jépardy*.'

180. EE. This is not properly a diphthong, but a long vowel; it is the long 'i'. But it is convenient to speak of it here, with a view to introduce the present tendency of other sounds to merge into this one. English spelling has been produced by such a variety of heterogeneous causes that its inconsistencies are not to be wondered at. Grimm has remarked on the want of regularity in our vowel usage: for we use a double *e* in *thee*, and a single one in *me*, whereas the vowel-sound is alike in the pronunciation. The probable cause was the aim at distinction between the pronoun *thee* and the definite article *the*—words which down to the end of the fifteenth century were written alike, and often check the reader. The eye has its claims as well as the ear, when so much is written and read; and this accounts for many cases of dissimilar spelling of similar sounds, as *be* the verb and *bee* the insect.

181. EA. This combination is particularly interesting, and we select it for expansion. It has no connection with the Saxon diphthong of the same form. It is not found in Chaucer. Where we write *ea* he wrote *e*: *beste*, *beast*; *bred*, *bread*; *clene*, *clean*; *ded*, *dead*; *deth*, *death*; *dere*, *dear*; *grete*, *great*; *herte*, *heart*; *mel*, *meal*; *pes*,

*peace*; ples, *please*; redy, *ready*; sprede, *spread*; tere, *tear*; whete, *wheat*. The change from *e* to *ea* may be thus accounted for. Chaucer's *e* was the French e-ouvert, which sounded as *eh*, not far from the vocalism of *day*, *hay*, *nay*. But in the English mouth this *e* became less open and more shrill continually, till at last it merged in 'i' which is its present lot. The *a* was then added to it in such syllables as adhered to the former sound; and thus I suppose *ea* was at first a reinforcement of e-ouvert, just as *gh* was a reinforcement of the old guttural of *h*. At first *ea* sounded as *ay*; but after a while it found the old tendency too strong for it, and it drifted away in that very direction from which the addition of *a* vainly sought to decoy it. And now most of the *ea* syllables are pronounced as *ee*. An illustration of this may be gathered from the history of the word *tea*.

182. We have all heard some village dame talk of her dish o' *tay*; but the men of our generation are surprised when they first learn that this pronunciation is classical English, and is enshrined in the verses of Alexander Pope. The following rhymes are from the *Rape of the Lock*.

'Soft yielding minds to Water glide away,  
And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental Tea.' Canto i.

'Here thou, great ANNA! whom three realms obey,  
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes Tea.' Canto iii.

That this was the general pronunciation of good company down to the close of the last century there is no doubt. The following quotation will carry us to 1775, the date of a poem entitled *Bath and It's Environs*, in three cantos, p. 25.

'Muse o'er some book, or trifle o'er the tea,  
Or with soft musick charm dull care away.'

This old pronunciation was borrowed with the word from

the French, who still call the Chinese beverage *tay*, and write it *thé*. And when tea was introduced into England by the name of *tay*, it seemed natural to represent that sound by the letters T E A.

183. Although there are a great many words in English which hold the diphthong *ea*, as *beat, dear, death, eat, fear, gear, head, learn, mean, neat, pear, read, seat, teat, wean*,—yet the cases of *ea* ending an English word are very few. Ben Jonson, in his day, having produced four of them, viz. *flea, plea, sea, yea*, added, ‘and you have at one view all our words of this termination.’ He forgot the word *lea*, or perhaps regarded it as a bad spelling for *ley* or *lay*. This makes five. A sixth, *pea*, has come into existence since. It is a mere creature of grammar, a singular begotten of the young plural *pease*. In the sixteenth century *pease* was singular, and *peason* or *peasen* was plural, as we see in the following passages from Surrey:—

‘All men might well dispraise  
My wit and enterprise,  
If I esteemed a *pease*  
Above a pearl in price.’

‘Tickle treasure, abhorred of reason,  
Dangerous to deal with, vain, of none avail;  
Costly in keeping, past not worth two *peason*;  
Slipper in sliding, as is an eeles tail.’

To these there has been added a seventh, viz. *tea*.

At the time when the orthography of TEA was determined, it is certain that most instances of EA final sounded as AY, and probable that all did. In a number of words with EA internal, the pronunciation differed. But even in these cases there is room to suspect that the AY sound was once general, if not universal. We still give it the AY sound in *measure, pleasure, treasure*; where EA, though in the midst of a word, is at the close of a syllable. And there are cases in which

it is still so sounded in the middle of a syllable, as *great* and *break*.

In Surrey we find *heat* rhyme to *great*, and no doubt it was a true rhyme. Surrey pronounced *heat* as the majority of our countrymen, at least in the west country, still do, viz. as *hayt*. The same poet rhymes *ease* to *assays* :—

‘The peasant, and the post, that serves at all assays;  
The ship-boy, and the galley-slave, have time to take their ease;’—

where it is plain that *ease* still kept to the French sound of *aise*. Then, further, the same poet has in a sonnet the following run of rhyming words :—

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{ease} \\ \text{mis\textit{ease}} \\ \text{please} \\ \text{days} \end{array} \right\}$$

which renders it tolerably plain, that *please* was pronounced as the French *plaise*, as it still is pronounced by the majority of English people.

184. This throws light upon a passage in Shakspeare, 1 *Henry IV*, ii. 3, where Falstaff says ‘if *Reasons* were as plentie as Black-berries, I would giue no man a *Reason* vpon compulsion, I.’ It seems that a pun underlies this; the association of reasons with blackberries springing out of the fact that *reasons* sounded like *raisins*. In the analogous word *season*, we have EA substituted for the older AY; for, in the fifteenth century, Lydgate wrote this word *saysoun* and *saysonne*. When we look at the word *treason*, and consider its relation to the French *trahison*, who can suppose that the pronunciation *treeson* is anything but a modernism?

These investigations suggest many questions as to the alterations that our pronunciation may have undergone. For instance, did Abraham Cowley pronounce *cheat* as we

often hear it in our own day, viz. as *chayt*? He has the following rhyme:—

‘If e’er ambition did my fancy cheat  
With any wish so mean as to be great.’

And how did Milton sound the rhymes of this couplet in the *L’Allegro*?—

‘With stories told of many a feat,  
How fairy Mab the junkets eat.’

Must we not suppose that *eat* being in the preterite, and equivalent to *ate*, had a sound unlike our present pronunciation of *feat*. This, with the derivation of the latter from the French *fait*, suggests the sounds *fayt* and *ayt*.

In *The Stage-Players Complaint* (1641), we find *nay* spelt *nea*: ‘Nea you know this well enough, but onely you love to be inquisitive.’

In further illustration we may quote from Michael Drayton’s *Polyolbion*, xixth song (1662):—

‘Foure such Immeasur’d Pooles, Phylosophers agree,  
Ith foure parts of the world undoubtedly to bee;  
From which they haue supposd, Nature the winds doth raise,  
And from them to proceed the flowing of the Seas.’

185. Dr. Watts (1709) rhymes *sea* to *away*. Sir Roundell Palmer’s *Book of Praise*, clxi:—

‘But timorous mortals start and shrink  
To cross this narrow sea,  
And linger shivering on the brink,  
And fear to launch away.’

In Cowper, *Alexander Selkirk*, we find *sea* rhyme to *survey*; and Goldsmith, in *The Haunch of Venison*, puts this into the mouth of an under-bred fine-spoken fellow:—

‘An under-bred fine-spoken fellow was he,  
And he smil’d as he look’d on the venison and me.  
“What have we got here?—Why this is good eating!  
Your own, I suppose—or is it in waiting?”’

When, in 1765, Josiah Wedgwood, having received his first order from Queen Charlotte, wrote to get some help from a relative in London, he described the list of tea-things which were ordered, and he spelt the word *tray* thus, 'trea'—for so only can we understand it—'Tea-pot & stand, spoon-trea.' The orthography may be either his own or that of Miss Chetwynd, from whom the instructions came.

Family names offer some examples to the same effect. A friend informs me that he had once a relative, who in writing was Mr. Lea, but he pronounced his name 'Lay'; and I am courteously permitted to use for illustration the name of Mr. Rea, of Newcastle, the well-known organist, whose family tradition renders the name as 'Ray.' The little river in Shropshire, which is written Rea, is called Ray.

186. If it has been made plain that *ea* sounded *ay*, it will be a step to the clearing of another anomaly. It has been asked why we spell *conceive* with *ei*, and yet spell *believe*, *reprieve* with *ie*? The difficulty lies in this fact—that the pronunciation of these dissimilar diphthongs is now the same. And the answer lies in this—that the pronunciation was formerly different. Those words which we now write with *ei*—to wit, *deceive*, *perceive*, *conceive*, *receive*—were all pronounced with a *-cayve* sound, as they still are in many localities. The readiest proof of this is in the facts, (1) that you will not find them rhymed with words of the *ie* type, and (2) that you will continually find them spelt with *ea*, as *deceave*, *perceave*, *conceave*, *receave*. (3) But however these words are spelt in the early prints, they are constantly distinguished in some way or other, as *decieued*, *beleueued*. Above, 147.

Another illustration of the old power of *ea* may be gathered from a source which has not received due attention: I mean the pronunciation of English in Ireland. It is well known

that there *resayve* is the sound for receive, *pays* for pease, *say* for sea, *aisy* for easy, *baste* for beast. These, and many other so-called Irishisms, are faithful monuments of the pronunciation of our fathers, at the time when English was planted in Ireland.

All these words have now gone into the *ee*-sound which is represented by *ie* in *believe*, and there is no doubt that this sound is a very encroaching one. There have long been two pronunciations of *great*, namely greet and grayt; though the latter is still dominant, and is likely to remain so. It is in bookish words that the progress of the *ee*-sound will be most rapid, because the teacher will there be less obstructed by usage, and teachers love general rules. Therefore *ea* once *ee* shall be always *ee*. A child learning to read, and coming to the word *inveigle* shall be told to call it inveegle, though the best usage at present is to say invaygle. Sir Thomas Browne spelt it with *ea* :

‘These Opinions I never maintained with pertinacy, or endeavoured to enveagle any mans belief unto mine.’—*Religio Medici*, fol. 1686 ; p. 4.

Among the words which still vacillate between the two sounds of *EA*, is the word *break* :

‘Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break  
Although it chill my withered cheek’ Scott.

‘Ah, his eyelids slowly break  
Their hot seals, and let him wake!’ Matthew Arnold.

That the latter is the pronunciation at the present time there can be no doubt: and yet the former is heard from so many persons who are able to read and write, that it may perhaps establish itself in the end.

Thus we see that *ea* has in most instances changed its sound from that of *ay* to that of *ee*. How are we to render any account of so apparently capricious a movement, except



by saying that a sentiment has taken possession of the public mind to the effect that *ay* is a rude braying sound, while *ee* is a refined and sweetly bleating one. Or, shall we suppose that this is only a reprisal and natural compensation for the area lost by this sound when it was ejected from its ancient lot, and the 'i' was invaded by the sound of Igh? Leaving such enquiries to the younger student, I will add two striking examples of the encroachment of this popular favourite, this *ee* sound. The first is the well-known instance of Beauchamp, which is pronounced Beecham. The second is more remarkable.

All along I have assumed that the value of *ay* is constant, and capable of being referred to as a standard, as the unshaken representative of that sound which *ea* had and has lost. But there is at least one remarkable exception to this assumed security of *ay*. For the last forty years or so there has been a prevailing tendency to pronounce *quay* kee; and *Torquay* is most numerous called Torquee. Mr. Pengelly tells me that he considers this as the established pronunciation in the place itself, and it is his own habit to say Torquee, though he still pronounces *quay* in the ancient style as kay. How has this habit grown? It seems to prove that our pronunciation is not set by the best examples; for nearly all those whom I should have thought most worthy of being imitated have from the earliest time in my memory said kay and Tor-kay.

187. In summing up the case of Spelling and Pronunciation, we may well make use of the example of TEA. When this word was first spelt, the letters came at the call of the sound: the spelling followed the pronunciation. Since that time, the letters having changed their value, the sound of the word has shared the vicissitude of its letters: the pronunciation has followed the spelling. It is manifest that

these movements have one and the same aim, namely, to make the spelling phonetically symbolise the pronunciation. There are two great obstacles to such a consummation: (1) The letters of the alphabet are too few to represent all the variety of simple sounds in the English language; (2) and even what they might do is not done, because of the restraining hand of traditional association. The consequence is, that when we use the word 'orthography,' we do not mean a mode of spelling which is true to the pronunciation, but one which is conventionally correct. The spirit of ORTHOGRAPHY is embodied in this dictum of Samuel Johnson: 'It is more important that the law should be known than that it should be right.'

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II.

### *On Spelling-reform.*

188. Alphabetic writing is essentially phonetic. It was the result of a sifting process which was conducted with little conscious design, by which all the other suggestions of picture-writing were gradually eliminated, and each figure was brought to represent one of the simple sounds obtained by the analysis of articulate speech. The historical development of Letters tells us what their essence and function is—viz. The expression of the Sound of words. Spelling is the counterpart of pronunciation. But there is a law at work to dis sever this natural affinity. Pronunciation is ever insensibly on the move, while spelling grows more and more stationary. The agitation for spelling-reform which appears in cultivated nations from time to time, aims at restoring the harmony between these two.

Among the Romans—a people eminently endowed with the philological sense—there were some attempts of this kind, one of which is of historical notoriety. The emperor Claudius was a phonetic reformer, and he wrote a book on the subject while in the obscurity of his early life. Three letters as a first instalment of reform he forced into use when he was emperor, but they were neglected after his time and forgotten. Yet two of the three have been quietly resumed by a late posterity. These represented I and U consonants as distinct from the cognate vowels. In the seventeenth century the European press determined this by the forms J and V. Claudius was not however the first to direct attention to the inadequacy of the Roman alphabet. Verrius Flaccus had made a memorable proposal with regard to the letter M. At the end of Latin words it was indistinctly heard, and therefore he proposed to cut the letter in two, and write only half of it in such positions—thus, N.

189. During the last three centuries many proposals for spelling-reform have been made in this country and in America. Among the reformers we find distinguished names.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The following is a dated list of constructors of phonetic alphabets in connection with the English language. Sir John Cheke, 1540. John Hart,

A strictly phonetic spelling-reform requires that we should have a separate character for every separate sound, and that no character should ever stand for any but its own particular sound. One such system has acquired the consistency which a working experience alone can give. Mr. Pitman's phonetic alphabet has been tested by thirty years of practical work, in printing books large and small, as well as in the continuous appearance of the *Phonetic Journal*, which is now in its thirty-first year. In this system the Roman alphabet is adopted as far as it goes, and new forms are added for the digraphs which, like *th*, *sh*, represent simple sounds. Although the place of publication is Bath, the movement first took a practical shape in Birmingham, where in 1843 Mr. Thomas Wright Hill originated a Phonetic Fund to meet the necessary sacrifices of such an experiment. Mr. Hill was the founder of Hazlewood school at Birmingham, and he had been an earnest advocate of spelling-reform during a long life. He was the father of Matthew Davenport Hill, Q.C., and of Sir Rowland Hill, and of three other distinguished sons. With that energy of practical reform for which all his sons have been conspicuous, and one has become famous, he travelled at an advanced age, with Mr. Isaac Pitman, from Tottenham to Birmingham to be present at the Phonetic Festival of 1843. At the seventh Phonetic Festival, held in Birmingham in 1849, this venerable man, then in his eighty-seventh year, made a long speech in favour of phonetic printing. After the meeting of 1843, Mr. Ellis began to give his valuable help to Mr. Pitman in the formation of the new characters, and from that year to the present the system has been in operation. The alphabet

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1569: 'An Orthographie conteyning the due order and reason howe to write or painte thimage of manne's voice, moste like to the life or nature.' Bishop Wilkins, 1668. Benjamin Franklin, 1768. Dr. Thornton, Philadelphia, 1793. James Ewing, Trenton, New Jersey, 1798. William Pelham, Boston, U.S. 1808. ('Rasselas' was printed in it.) Thomas Embree, Philadelphia, 1813. Joseph G. Chambers, Philadelphia, 1817. Abner Kueceland, Philadelphia, 1825. M. H. Barton, Harvard, U.S. 1831. N. Nash, Philadelphia, 1836. Rev. W. Beardsley, St. Louis, 1841. Lieut. Richard Douglas, Baltimore, 1843. Benjamin A. Antrim, Philadelphia, 1843. Andrew Comstock, Philadelphia, 1846. John S. Pulsifer, Orswigsburg, Pennsylvania, 1848. John P. Hart, New Haven, U.S. 1848. Alexander Melville Bell, London, 1865.

which has thus been produced consists of thirty-eight characters, which are arranged below according to Mr. Pitman's distribution. The quotations which are given in illustration are taken from the *Phonetic Journal*, 1862 and 1864.

## THE PHONETIC ALPHABET.

## VOWELS.

*Guttural.*

|     |       |                   |
|-----|-------|-------------------|
| A a | as in | am, fast, far     |
| ʌ s | „     | alms, father      |
| E e | „     | ell, head, any    |
| ɛ e | „     | ale, air, bear    |
| I i | „     | ill, pity, filial |
| ɪ i | „     | eel, eat, mere    |

*Labial.*

|     |       |                   |
|-----|-------|-------------------|
| O o | as in | on, not, nor      |
| ɔ w | „     | all, law, ought   |
| ʊ s | „     | up, son, journal  |
| œ e | „     | ope, coat, pour   |
| U u | „     | full, foot, could |
| ʊ u | „     | do, food, tour    |

## DIPHTHONGS.

|       |       |                |
|-------|-------|----------------|
| ɛ j   | as in | by, kind, nigh |
| ʊ u   | „     | new, due, unit |
| OU ou | „     | now, pound     |
| OI oi | „     | boy, voice     |

## FOREIGN SOUNDS.

|     |       |                |
|-----|-------|----------------|
| œ œ | as in | jeûne (French) |
| ʊ u | „     | du (French)    |
| ʊ u | „     | dû (French)    |
| ʊ i | „     | un (French)    |
| ʃ x | „     | ich (German)   |
| ʃ q | „     | Sieg (German)  |

## CONSONANTS.

*Mutes.*

|     |       |              |
|-----|-------|--------------|
| P p | as in | rope, post   |
| B b | „     | robe, boast  |
| T t | „     | fate, tip    |
| D d | „     | fade, dip    |
| Ɔ ɔ | „     | etch, chump  |
| J j | „     | edge, jump   |
| K k | „     | leek, cane   |
| G g | „     | league, gain |

*Continuants.*

|     |       |                  |
|-----|-------|------------------|
| F f | as in | safe, fat        |
| V v | „     | save, vat        |
| H h | „     | wreath, thigh    |
| ð d | „     | wreathe, thy     |
| S s | „     | hiss, seal       |
| Z z | „     | his, zeal        |
| Σ j | „     | vicious, she     |
| Ʒ ʒ | „     | vision, pleasure |

*Nasals.*

|     |       |            |
|-----|-------|------------|
| M m | as in | seem, met  |
| N n | „     | seen, net  |
| ŋ ŋ | „     | sing, long |

*Liquids.*

|     |       |             |
|-----|-------|-------------|
| L l | as in | fall, light |
| R r | „     | more, right |

*Coalescents.*

|     |       |            |
|-----|-------|------------|
| W w | as in | wet, quit  |
| Y y | „     | yet, young |

*Aspirate.*

|     |       |          |
|-----|-------|----------|
| H h | as in | he, hope |
|-----|-------|----------|

## 190. SPECIMEN OF PHONETIC PRINTING.

"Wi kanot tel az yet whot langwey iz. It me bi a prœdskſon ov netur, a wœrk ov human art, or a Divijn gift. Bst tu whotever sfir it belongz, it wud sim tu stand unsr-past—ne snikwald in it—bj cnitiſh els.

"De sjens ov langwey iz a sjens ov veri modern det. Wi kanot tres its liniej mœg beyond de beginiſh ov our senturi, and it iz skersli resivd az yet on a futiſh ov ikwoliti bj de elder brangez ov lerniſh. Its veri nem iz stil snseteld, and de veriss titelz dat hav bin given tu it in Ingland, Frans, and Jermani, ar sœ vœg and veriſh dat de hav led tu de most konfuzd idiaz amœg de psblik at larj az tu de rial objekts ov dis nœ sjens. Wi hir it spœken ov az Komparativ Filoloji, Sjentifik Etimoloji, Fœnoloji, and Glosoloji. In Frans it haz resivd de konvinient, bst sœmwhot barbarœs nem ov *Lengistik*. I miſelf prefer de simpel designeson ov de Sjens ov Langwey, deœ in deiz dez ov li-soundiſh titelz, dis plen nem will hardli mit wiſt jeneral akseptans." — *Maks Muler's Lekturz on de Sjens ov Langwey, (Fœrst Siriz,) 1861.*

"I fil konvinst ov de truœ and rizonabelnes ov de prinsipelz on whiſh de Fœnetik Reform rests, . . . and deœ Mr Pitman me not liv

"We cannot tell as yet what language is. It may be a production of nature, a work of human art, or a Divine gift. But to whatever sphere it belongs, it would seem to stand unsurpassed—nay unequalled in it—by anything else.

"The science of language is a science of very modern date. We cannot trace its lineage much beyond the beginning of our century, and it is scarcely received as yet on a footing of equality by the elder branches of learning. Its very name is still unsettled, and the various titles that have been given to it in England, France, and Germany, are so vague and varying that they have led to the most confused ideas among the public at large as to the real objects of this new science. We hear it spoken of as Comparative Philology, Scientific Etymology, Phonology, and Glossology. In France it has received the convenient, but somewhat barbarous name of *Linguistique*. I myself prefer the simple designation of the Science of Language, though in these days of high-sounding titles, this plain name will hardly meet with general acceptance." — *Max Müller's Lectures on the Science of Language, (First Series,) 1861.*

"I feel convinced of the truth and reasonableness of the principles on which the Phonetic Reform rests, . . . and though Mr Pitman may not live

tu si de rezslts ov hiz perse-  
virin and disinterested ekzer-  
sonz, it rekwirz nɔ̃ profetik  
pouer to persiv dat whot at  
prezent iz puw-puud bi de  
meni, wil mek its we in de  
end, snles met bi arguments  
stronger dan doz hidertu lev-  
eld at de *Fonetik Nuz*. Wsn  
argument whiq mjt bi ssp-  
ozd tu we wid de student ov  
langwey, nemli, de obskureson  
ov de etimolojikl strsktur ov  
wsrdz, i kanot konsider veri  
formidabel. De pronsnsieson  
ov langwejez genjez akordin  
tu fikt lɔ̃z, de speliŋ iz  
genjd in de most arbitrari  
maner, sɔ̃ dat if our speliŋ  
foled de pronsnsieson ov  
wsrdz, it wud in rialiti bi a  
greter help tu de kritikal stu-  
dent ov langwey dan de prezent  
nserten and sɔ̃sientifik mɔ̃d  
ov rjtiŋ."—*Maks Muler's Lek-  
turz on de Sjens ov Langwey,  
(Sekond Siriz,) 1863.*

to see the results of his perse-  
vering and disinterested exer-  
tions, it requires no prophetic  
power to perceive that what at  
present is pooh-pooled by the  
many, will make its way in the  
end, unless met by arguments  
stronger than those hitherto lev-  
elled at the *Fonetik Nuz*. One  
argument which might be sup-  
posed to weigh with the student of  
language, namely, the obscuration  
of the etymological structure of  
words, I cannot consider very  
formidable. The pronunciation  
of languages changes according  
to fixed laws, the spelling is  
changed in the most arbitrary  
manner, so that if our spelling  
followed the pronunciation of  
words, it would in reality be a  
greater help to the critical stu-  
dent of language than the present  
uncertain and unscientific mode  
of writing."—*Max Müller's Lec-  
tures on the Science of Language,  
(Second Series,) 1863.*

To offer an estimate of the merits of this phonetic alphabet would be out of place here. It puts forward a claim to supersede that now in use by right of superior and universal fitness. This claim seems likely to be tested by a variety of practical experiments; for example, it has been used for printing three of the Gospels, Genesis, the Psalms, and the Acts in the Mikmak language, that of the natives of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, under the direction of the Bible Society. The friends and promoters of this alphabet say that it is soon caught by savages abroad and by children at home; and that for the education of our own people it provides the quickest and best means of learning to read the ordinary print. All this will have to be established by a slow probation; and the supporters of the system seem resolved to sustain the trial. Meanwhile, I will point out an

advantage which this phonetic alphabet offers to the young philologer. He would find it a profitable exercise to master this alphabet and transliterate passages of English into it. The gain would be that he would thereby acquire consciousness of the elementary sounds which go to make up English words. If the want of this acquirement is not much felt by English philologers, it is because they are unaware how great a defect it is and how seriously it impedes their researches.

191. But there are schemes before the public which aim at a less radical change, and advocate only a certain measure of reformation. They do not aspire to ideal perfection in the phonetic sense, and yet they have a standard of their own, which may be described as consistent spelling. The distinction in itself is just, and it may be exemplified in the French language. Of the three languages we may say that the German is (comparatively speaking) phonetic, and the French consistent; while the English is neither the one nor the other.

The reformers of whom we are about to speak content themselves with the endeavour to bring English spelling nearer to a state of consistency with itself. Such is the purpose of the system projected by Mr. Edward Jones, and recently discussed at a meeting in Liverpool. He would correct our orthography by using the present letters of the alphabet more consistently, without adding new letters or combinations; and by reverting, in certain cases, to the simpler spelling of standard old authors. This proposal is advocated on the ground of the small amount of change which it would necessitate.

192. The following are said to be all the words beginning with A that would have to be changed:—

|            |           |             |            |
|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| aback      | abak      | accoutre    | accooter   |
| abbey      | abby      | ache        | ake        |
| abeyance   | abayance  | achieve     | acheev     |
| ablative   | ablativ   | achromatic  | acromatic  |
| aboard     | abord     | acquiesce   | acquiess   |
| above      | abuv      | acre        | aker       |
| abroad     | abraud    | active      | activ      |
| absolve    | absolv    | adjourn     | adjurn     |
| abstemious | abstemius | admeasure   | admèsure   |
| abusive    | abusiv    | adolescent  | adolèssent |
| abyss      | abiss     | adventurous | adventurus |



|            |          |            |            |
|------------|----------|------------|------------|
| ædile      | édile    | aphorism   | aforism    |
| affright   | afrite   | apiece     | apecece    |
| affront    | affrunt  | apologue   | apolog     |
| afloat     | afrote   | appall     | apaul      |
| aggrieve   | agreev   | appeal     | apeel      |
| aghost     | agast    | appear     | apeer      |
| agone      | agon     | appease    | apees      |
| ahead      | ahed     | approach   | aproche    |
| airbuilt   | airbilt  | approve    | aproov     |
| airtight   | airtite  | arabesque  | arabesk    |
| alchemy    | alkemy   | archæology | arkeology  |
| alight     | alite    | archangel  | arcangel   |
| all        | aul      | architect  | arkitect   |
| alphabet   | alfabet  | arduous    | arduus     |
| altar      | aultar   | are        | ar         |
| always     | aulways  | arouse     | arous      |
| ambitious  | ambitius | asphalt    | asfalt     |
| amphibious | amfibius | atmosphere | atmosphere |
| anchor     | ancor    | auspicious | auspicius  |
| anneal     | aneel    | autograph  | autograf   |
| answer     | anser    | autumn     | autum      |
| anxious    | anxius   |            |            |

Upon this system, which Mr. Jones calls the 'Analogic,' and which is particularly recommended for its educational usefulness, Mr. Ellis has commented vigorously. He sees no gain or beauty in it, and he denies its consistency. The memory is not relieved of its grievance, and the whole plan is aimless. In like terms he would speak of all attempts to alter our orthography partially. If a change is to be made at all, it must be by a restoration of the old phonetic principle which reigned paramount till it perished in the Wars of the Roses.—*Phonetic Journal*, July 2, 1870.

193. The third and last scheme to be mentioned is one that takes a larger view, and endeavours to conciliate opposite interests. Mr. Danby P. Fry has proposed a plan for the improvement of English orthography, which is to avoid all breach of continuity whether as regards the forms and powers of the characters, or as respects the etymology. The only case in which he confers a new power on a character, or modifies its form, is in the letter *v*. He would have a *v* vowel, to represent the vowel in *full*, *bull*, and to be distinguished by a slight peculiarity of form. With this addition the twenty-six simple letters would become twenty-seven.

For the rest he proceeds on the principle of codifying the actual practice, and he would therefore recognise the consonantal digraphs *ch, gh, kh, ph, rh, sh, th, wh, ng*, as alphabetic characters, adding to them *dh* and *zh*. He would write *the* and *that* as 'dhe' and 'dhat': and *azure* he would write 'azhure.' After the same manner the vocalic digraphs *ee, ai, aa, au, oa, oo, oi, ou*, would be counted as primary letters, and thus complete an alphabet of forty-six characters. The *e* final would be discarded in all instances in which it is really idle, having no effect on the preceding vowel; and *freez, gauz*, would take the place of *freeze, gauze* (160). In this scheme the idea seems to be that a consistent orthography ought to be discovered without the sacrifice of tradition and historical association. It would be—not uniform spelling, but consistent spelling; so dhat dhat half ov dhe language which iz spelt etymologically may be spelt consistently on dhe etymological principle, while dhe odher half ov dhe language which iz spelt phonetically may be spelt consistently on dhe phonetic principle.'

The phonetic principle is to be admitted when it does not conflict with the etymological. For instance, the *s* would be rejected from *island* (properly *iland*), but retained in *isle*, to which it rightly belongs. For Mr. Fry proposes, as a means of reconciling tradition with current pronunciation, that silent letters should be preserved whenever required by etymology, but otherwise omitted.

194. More plans are proposed than we have enumerated or have space to enumerate. It is plain where so many schemes are broached, that the need of some change is very widely felt, but there seems to be little agreement as to the direction reform should take.

But whenever a distinct path is chosen, it will at once lay open to our view a new and as yet unnoticed difficulty. When we enter on the path of spelling-reform, we pass from that on which we are tolerably agreed, namely, conventional orthography, to raise a new structure on a foundation of unascertained stability. The moment you resolve to spell the sound, you bring into the foreground what before lay almost unobserved—the great diversity of opinion which exists as to the correct sound of many words.

## CHAPTER III.

### OF INTERJECTIONS.

195. THE term Interjection signifies something that is 'pitched in among' things of which it does not naturally form a constituent part. The name has been given to it by grammarians, in order to express its relation to grammatical structures. It is found in them, but it forms no part of them.

The interjection may be defined as a form of speech which is articulate and symbolic but not grammatical. It is only to be called grammatical in that widest sense of the word, in which all that is written, including accents, stops, and quotation marks, would be comprised within the notion of grammar. When we speak of grammar as the handmaid of logic, then the interjection must stand aside.

Emotion is quick, and leaves no time for logical thought : if it use grammatical phrases they must be ready made and familiar to the lips ; there is not time to select what is appropriate or consecutive. Hence the limited variety of interjections, and the wide and almost unlimited use of individual forms.

An interjection implies a meaning which it would require a whole grammatical sentence to expound, and it may be regarded as the rudiment of such a sentence. But it is a confusion of thought to rank it among the parts of speech. It is not in any sense a part ; it is a whole (though an

indistinct) expression of feeling or of thought. An interjection bears to its context the same sort of relation as a pictorial illustration does.

We rightly call an adjective or an adverb a Part of Speech, because these have no meaning by themselves without the aid of nouns and verbs, and because their very designation implies the existence of nouns and verbs. But an interjection is intelligible without any grammatical adjunct; and such completeness as it is capable of is attained without collateral assistance.

196. Ancient grammarians ranked the interjections as adverbs, but the moderns have made them a separate class. If it were a question to which of the parts of speech the interjection is most cognate, it must be answered to the verb. For if we take any simple interjection, such as, for example, the cry 'Oh! Oh!' in the House of Commons, and assign to it a predicative value, it can only be done by a verb, either in the imperative or in the indicative first person. Either you must say it is equivalent to 'Don't say such things,' or else to 'I doubt,' 'I wonder,' 'I demur,' 'I dispute,' 'I deny,' 'I protest': by one or more of these or such verbs must 'Oh, Oh!' be explained; and thus it seems to present itself as a rudimentary verb. But this again rises, not out of any singular affection that it bears to the verb in its formal character, but out of the general fact that the verb is the central representative and focus and full expansion of that predicative force, which unequally pervades all language, but which in the interjection is wrapped round and enfolded with an involucre of emotion.

It may stand either insulated in the sentence, or by virtue of this obscure verbal character, it may be connected with it by a preposition, as—

'Oh for a humbler heart and prouder song!'

This is the nearest approach which it makes to structural relations with the sentence, and this sort of relation it can have with a noun or pronoun, as—

‘They gaped upon me with their mouths, and said: Fie on thee, fie on thee, we saw it with our eyes.’ *Psalm xxxvi. 21.*

From that same germ of verbal activity it joins readily with the conjunction. Operating with the conjunction, it rounds off and renders natural an abrupt beginning, and forms as it were the bridge between the spoken and the unspoken:—

‘Oh if in after life we could but gather  
The very refuse of our youthful hours!’ Charles Lloyd.

Because of the variety of possible meanings in the interjection, writing is less able to represent interjections than to express grammatical language. Even in the latter, writing is but an imperfect medium, because it fails to convey the accompaniments, such as the look, the tone, the gesture. This defect is more evident in the case of interjections, where the written word is but a very small part of the expression; and the manner, the pitch of tone, the gesture, is nearly everything.

197. Hence also it comes to pass that the interjection is of all that is printed the most difficult thing to read well aloud; for not only does it require a rare command of modulation, but the reader has moreover to be perfectly acquainted with the situation and temperament of the person using the interjection. Shakspeare’s interjections cannot be rendered with any truth, except by one who has mastered the whole play.

In the accompaniments lies the rhetoric of the interjection, which is used with astonishing effect by children and

savages. For it is to these that the interjection more especially belongs; and in proportion to the march of culture is the decline of interjectional speech.

But though the use of interjections is very much reduced by civilisation, and though there are whole fields of literature from which they are utterly banished, as History, Mathematics, Physical Science,—yet they have a sphere in which they are retained, and in this, the literature of the emotions, their importance will always be considerable. It should moreover be added, that while most of the natural accompaniments of interjectional speech, such as gestures, grimaces, and gesticulations, are restrained by civilisation, there yet remains one, which alone is able to render justice to the interjection, and which culture tends to improve and develope, and that is, modulation. It is this which makes it still worth a poet's while to throw meaning into his interjections.

Moreover, though it is true on the whole that interjectional communications are restrained by civilisation; yet it is also to be noted on the other hand, that there are certain interjections which are the fruits of culture, and only find a place in the higher and more mature forms of human speech. Hence an important division, which will make this chapter fall into the two heads of (1) interjections of nature, or primitive interjections; and (2) artificial or historical interjections. The distinction between these sorts will be generally this,—that the latter have a philological derivation, and the former have not.

### § 1. *The Natural Interjections.*

198. O; oh! This is well known as one of the earliest articulations of infants, to express surprise or delight. Later

in life it comes to indicate also fear, aspiration, appeal, and an indefinite variety of emotions. It would almost seem that in proportion as the spontaneous modulation of the voice comes to perfection, in the same degree the range of this most generic of all interjections becomes enlarged, and that according to the tone in which *oh* is uttered, it may be understood to mean almost any one of the emotions of which humanity is capable.

This interjection owes its great predominance to the influence of the Latin language, in which it was very frequently used. And there is one particular use of it which more especially bears a Latin stamp. That is the *O* of the vocative case, as when in prayers we say, *O Lord* ; *O Thou to whom all creatures bow*.

We should distinguish between the sign of the vocative and the emotional interjection, writing *O* for the former, and *oh* for the latter, as—

‘Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed  
Within thy beams, O Sun!’

Blanco White; in Abp. Trench’s *Household Poetry*, cclvii.

‘But she is in her grave,—and oh  
The difference to me!’ Wordsworth.

This distinction of spelling should by all means be kept up, as it is based upon good ground. There is a difference between ‘O sir!’ ‘O king!’ and ‘Oh! sir,’ ‘Oh! Lord,’ both in sense and pronunciation.

As to the sense, the *O* prefixed merely imparts to the title a vocative effect; while the *Oh* conveys some particular sentiment, as of appeal, entreaty, expostulation, or some other.

And as to sound, the *O* is enclitic; that is to say, it has no accent of its own, but is pronounced with the word to which it is attached, as if it were its unaccented first

syllable. The term Enclitic signifies 'reclining on,' and so the interjection *O* in 'O Lord' reclines on the support afforded to it by the accentual elevation of the word 'Lord.' So that 'O Lord' is pronounced like such a disyllable as *alight, alike, away*; in which words the metrical stroke could never fall on the first syllable. *Oh* / on the contrary, is one of the fullest of monosyllables, and it would be hard to place it in a verse except with the stress upon it. The example from Wordsworth illustrates this. .

Precedence has been given to this interjection because it is the commonest of the simple or natural interjections, — not that it is one of the longest standing in the language.

Our oldest interjections are *la* and *wa*, and each of these merits a separate notice.

199. *La* is that interjection which in modern English is spelt *lo*. It was used in Saxon times, both as an emotional cry, and also as a sign of the respectful vocative. The most reverential style in addressing a superior was *La leof*, an expression not easy to render in modern English, but which is something like *O my liege*, or *O my lord*, or *O sir*.

In modern times it has taken the form of *lo* in literature, and it has been supposed to have something to do with the verb *to look*. In this sense it has been used in the New Testament to render the Greek *ἰδοὺ* that is, Behold! But the interjection *la* was quite independent of another Saxon exclamation, viz. *loc*, which may with more probability be associated with *locian*, to look..

The fact seems to be that the modern *lo* represents both the Saxon interjections *la* and *loc*, and that this is one among many instances where two Saxon words have been merged into a single English one.

'Lo, how they feignen chalk for cheese.'

Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, vol. i. p. 17, ed. Pauli.



The *la* of Saxon times has none of the indicatory or pointing force which *lo* now has, and which fits it to go so naturally with an adverb of locality, as 'Lo here,' or 'Lo there'; or

'Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves.'

Beattie, *Minstrel*, Bk. i.

While *lo* became the literary form of the word, *la* has still continued to exist more obscurely, at least down to a recent date, even if it be not still in use. *La* may be regarded as a sort of feminine to *lo*. In novels of the close of last century and the beginning of this, we see *la* occurring for the most part as a trivial exclamation by the female characters.

In Miss Edgeworth's tale of *The Good French Governess*, a silly affected boarding-school miss says *la* repeatedly:—

"'La!'" said Miss Fanshaw, "we had no such book as this at Suxberry House."

Miss Fanshaw, to shew how well she could walk, crossed the room, and took up one of the books.

"*Alison upon Taste*—that's a pretty book, I daresay; but la! what's this, Miss Isabella? *A Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments*—dear me! that must be a curious performance—by a smith! a common smith!"

In *The Election: a Comedy*, by Joanna Baillie (1798), Act ii. Sc. 1, Charlotte thus soliloquises:—

'Charlotte. La, how I should like to be a queen, and stand in my robes, and have all the people introduced to me!'

And when Charles compares her cheeks to the 'pretty delicate damask rose,' she exclaims, 'La, now you are flattering me.'

And to shew that this trivial little interjection is traceable back to early times, and that it is one with the old Saxon *la*, we may cite the authority of Shakspeare in the mid interval, who, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, puts this exclamation

into the mouths of Master Slender first, and of Mistress Quickly afterwards.

*Slén.* Mistris Anne: your selfe shall goe first.

*Anne.* Not I sir, pray you keepe on.

*Slén.* Truly, I will not goe first: truly la; I will not doe you that wrong.

*Anne.* I pray you Sir.

*Slén.* Ile rather be vnmanly, then troublesome; you doe your selfe wrong indeede-la.' (Act i. Sc. i.)

Here the interjection seems to retain somewhat of its old ceremonial significance: but when, in the ensuing scene, Mistress Quickly says, 'This is all indeede-la: but ile nere put my finger in the fire, and neede not,' there is nothing in it but the merest expletive.

**200. Wa** has a history much like that of *la*. It has changed its form in modern English to *wo*. 'Wo,' in the New Testament, as Rev. viii. 13, stands for the Greek interjection *ὦαί* and the Latin *væ*. In the same way it is used in many passages in which the interjectional character is distinct. This word must be distinguished from *woe*, which is a substantive. For instance, in the phrase, 'weal and woe.' And in such scriptures as Prov. xxiii. 29: 'Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?'

The fact is, that there were two distinct old words, namely, the interjection *wa* and the substantive *woh* (genitive *woges*), which means depravity, wickedness, misery. Often as these have been blended, it would be convenient to observe the distinction, which is still practically valid, by a several orthography, writing the interjection *wo*, and the substantive *woe*.

This interjection was compounded with the previous one into the form **wala** or **walawa**—an exclamation which is frequent in Chaucer, and which, before it disappeared, was modified into the feebler form of **wellaway**. A degenerate variety of this form was *well-a-day*. Pathetic cries have a

certain disposition to implicate the present time, as in *woe worth the day*!

201. There was yet another compound interjection made with *la* by prefixing the interjection *ea*. Hence the Saxon compound *eala*. This occurs often in the Saxon Gospels as a mere sign of the vocative; for example, 'Eala þu wif mycel ys þin geleafa,' O woman, great is thy faith, Matt. xv. 28; 'Eala fæder Abraham, gemiltsa me,' Father Abraham, pity me, Luke xvi. 24.

This *eala* may be regarded as the stock on which the French *hélas* was grafted, and from the conjunction with which sprung the modern *alas*, which appears in English of the thirteenth century, as in *Robert of Gloucester*, 4198, 'Alas! alas! þou wrecche mon, wuch mysaventure haþ þe ybrogt in to þys stede,' Alas! alas! thou wretched man, what misadventure hath brought thee into this place? And in Chaucer it is a frequent interjection. In a pathetic passage of the *Knight's Tale* it is used repeatedly.

'Allas the wo, allas the peynes stronge,  
That I for yow haue suffred, and so longe;  
Allas the deeth, allas myn Emelye,  
Allas departynge of our compaignye,  
Allas myn hertes queene, allas my wyf,  
Myn hertes lady, endere of my lyf.'

**Alack** seems to be the more genuine representation of *eala*, which, escaping the influence of *hélas*, drew after it (or preserved rather?) the final guttural so congenial to the interjection. Thus the modern *alack* suggests an old form *ealah*. This interjection has rather a trivial use in the south of England, and we do not find it used with a dignity equal to that of *alas*, until by Sir Walter Scott the language of Scotland was brought into one literature with our own. Jeanie Deans cries out before the tribunal at the most painful crisis of the trial: 'Alack a-day! she never told me.'

Still, the word is on the whole associated mainly with trivial occasions, and in this connection of ideas it has engendered the adjective *lackadaysical*, to characterise a person who flies into ecstasies too readily.

**202. Pooh** seems connected with the French exclamation of physical disgust: *Pouah, quelle infection!* But our *pooh* expresses an analogous moral sentiment: 'Pooh! pooh! it's all stuff and nonsense.'

**Psha** expresses contempt. 'Doubt is always crying *psha* and sneering.'—Thackeray, *Humourists*, p. 69.

**Heigh ho.** Some interjections have so vague, so filmy a meaning, that it would take a great many words to interpret what their meaning is. They seem as well fitted to be the echo of one thought or feeling as another; or even to be no more than a mere melodious continuance of the rhythm:—

'How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!  
How pleasant it is to have money.'

Arthur H. Clough.

This will suffice to exhibit the nature of the first class of interjections;—those which stand nearest to nature and farthest from art; those which owe least to conventionality and most to genuine emotion; those which are least capable of orthographic expression and most dependent upon oral modulation. It is to this class of interjections that the following quotation applies.

'It has long and reasonably been considered that the place in history of these expressions is a very primitive one. Thus De Broses describes them as necessary and natural words, common to all mankind, and produced by the combination of man's conformation with the interior affections of his mind.'—Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, ch. v.

And this writer has produced a large collection of evidence tending to the probability that the affirmative answers *aye*, *I* (102), *yea*, *yes*, are of this primitive class of words, although

their forms may have been modified by admixture of grammatical material.

§ 2. *Historical Interjections.*

203. The interjections which we have been considering thus far, may be called the spontaneous or primitive interjections, and they are such as have no basis in grammatical forms.

But we now pass on to the other group, which may be called the artificial or secondary interjections; a group which, though extra-grammatical no less than the former, in the sense that they do not enter into the grammatical construction, are yet founded upon grammatical words. Verbs, nouns, participles, adjectives, have at times lost their grammatical character, and have lapsed into the state of interjections.

Our first example shall be borrowed from the manners and customs of the British parliament. That scene may fairly be regarded as presenting to our view the most mature and full-grown exhibition of the powers of human speech, and it is there that one of the most famous of interjections first originated, and is in constant employment. The cry of 'Hear, hear,' originally an imperative verb, is now nothing more nor less than a great historical interjection. The following is the history of the exclamation, as described by Lord Macaulay, *History of England*, ch. xi. (1689).

'The King therefore, on the fifth day after he had been proclaimed, went with royal state to the House of Lords, and took his seat on the throne. The Commons were called in; and he, with many gracious expressions, reminded his hearers of the perilous situation of the country, and exhorted them to take such steps as might prevent unnecessary delay in the transaction of public business. His speech was received by the gentlemen who crowded the bar with the deep hum by which our ancestors were wont to indicate approbation, and which was often heard in places more sacred than

the Chamber of the Peers. As soon as he had retired, a Bill, declaring the Convention a Parliament, was laid on the table of the Lords, and rapidly passed by them. In the Commons the debates were warm. The House resolved itself into a Committee; and so great was the excitement, that, when the authority of the Speaker was withdrawn, it was hardly possible to preserve order. Sharp personalities were exchanged. The phrase "hear him," a phrase which had originally been used only to silence irregular noises, and to remind members of the duty of attending to the discussion, had, during some years, been gradually becoming what it now is; that is to say, a cry indicative, according to the tone, of admiration, acquiescence, indignation, or derision.'

The historian could not have chosen more suitable words had it been his intention to describe the transition of a grammatical part of speech into the condition of an interjectional symbol, whose signification depends on the tone in which it is uttered. The fact is, that when a large assembly is animated with a common sentiment which demands instantaneous utterance, it can find that utterance only through interjections. A crowd of grown men is here in the same condition as the infant, and must speak in those forms to which expression is imparted only by a variety of tone.

Nothing is too neutral or too colourless to make an interjection of, especially among a demonstrative people. In Italian *altro* is simply *other*; and yet it has acquired an interjectional power of variable signification.

"Have you ever thought of looking to me to do any kind of work?"

John Baptist answered with that peculiar back-handed shake of the right forefinger, which is the most expressive negative in the Italian language.

"No! You knew from the first moment when you saw me here, that I was a gentleman?"

"*ALTRO!*" returned John Baptist, closing his eyes and giving his head a most vehement toss. The word being, according to its Genoese emphasis, a confirmation, a contradiction, an assertion, a denial, a taunt, a compliment, a joke, and fifty other things, became in the present instance, with a significance beyond all power of written expression, our familiar English "I believe you!"—Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, Bk. I. ch. i.

204. The Liturgy, when it was in Latin, was a prolific source for the minting of popular interjections. Where ver-

nacular words are changed into interjections, some plain reason for their selection may generally be found in the grammatical sense of such words. But where a Latin word of religion came to be popular as an exclamation, it was as likely to be the sound as the sense that gave it currency. In the fourteenth century, BENEDICITE had this sort of career; and it does not appear how it could have been other than a senseless exclamation from the first. It often occurs in Chaucer; and with that variety of misspelling which a degenerate word is naturally liable to, we find it written *benedicitee*, *benediste*.

The charm of this word, and its availability as an interjection, was no doubt largely due to its being in a dead language. So Mr. Mitford tells us that the Japanese have an interjection which was originally a conglomerate of certain sacred words which they do not precisely understand; and that this compound interjection serves by tonal variation for all manner of occasions:—*Nammiyô!* *nammiyô!* self-depreciatory; or grateful and reverential; or expressive of conviction; or mournful and with much head-shaking; or meekly and entreatingly; or with triumphant exultation<sup>1</sup>.

Ejaculations which once were earnest, may sink into trite and trivial expletives. The cursory conversational way in which *Mon Dieu* is used in France by all classes of persons, without distinction of age, sex, education or condition, astonishes English people, not because the like is unheard in England, but because among us it is restricted both as to the persons who use it, and also as to the times and occasions of its utterance. There is no person whatever in England who uses such an exclamation when he is upon his good behaviour.

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<sup>1</sup> *Tales of Old Japan*, by A. B. Mitford, vol. ii. p. 128. Macmillan, 1871.

On the other hand, we have had this interjectional habit in certain graver uses, and have not yet quite discarded it. In Coverdale's Translation, 1535, we read 'Wolde God that I had a cotage some where farre from folke,' which was corrected in the Bible of 1611 to this—'Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men.' Jer. ix. 2. But even the latter version retained traces of this exclamatory habit which will probably be removed in our day. See 208.

205. Not only is it true that interjections are formed out of grammatical words, but also it is further true that certain grammatical words may stand as interjections in an occasional way, without permanently changing their nature. This chiefly applies to some of the more conventional colloquialisms. Perhaps there is not a purer or more condensed interjection in English literature, than that *INDEED* in *Othello*, Act iii. Sc. 3. It contains in it the gist of the chief action of the play, and it implies all that the plot developes. It ought to be spoken with an intonation worthy of the diabolic scheme of Iago's conduct. There is no thought of the grammatical structure of the compound, consisting of the preposition 'in' and the substantive 'deed,' which is equivalent to act, fact, or reality. All this vanishes and is lost in the mere iambic disyllable which is employed as a vehicle for the feigned tones of surprise.

*Iago.* I did not thinke he had bin acquainted with hir.

*Oth.* O yes, and went betweene vs very oft.

*Iago.* *INDEED!*

*Oth.* Indeed? I indeed. Discern'st thou ought in that? Is he not honest?

*Iago.* Honest, my lord?

*Oth.* Honest? I, honest!

Thus strong passion may so scorch up, as it were, the organism of a word, that it ceases to have any of that grammatical quality which the calm light of the



mind appreciates; and it becomes, for the nonce, an interjection.

206. And not only passion, but ignorance may do the like. With uneducated persons, their customary words and phrases grow to be very like interjections, especially those phrases which are peculiar to and traditional in the vocation they follow. When a porter at a railway-station cries BY'R LEAVE, he may understand the analysis of the words he uses; and then he is speaking logically and grammatically, though elliptically. If he does not understand the construction of the phrase he uses, and if he is quite ignorant how much is implied and left unsaid, he merely uses a conventional cry as an interjection. A cry of this sort, uttered as a conglomerate whole, where the mind makes no analysis, is, as far as the speaker is concerned, an interjection. We cannot doubt that this is the case in those instances where we hear it uttered as follows: 'By'r leave, if you please!' It is plain in this instance that the speaker understands the latter clause, but does not understand the former—for, if he did, he would feel the latter to be superfluous.

207. **Fudge.** Isaac Disraeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. iii., quotes a pamphlet of the date 1700, to shew that this interjection has sprung from a man's name.

'There was, sir, in our time, one Captain Fudge, commander of a merchantman, who, upon his return from a voyage, how ill-fraught soever his ship was, always brought home his owners a good cargo of lies; so much that now aboard ship, the sailors when they hear a great lie told, cry out "You fudge it."'

He has added a circumstance which is of great use for the illustration of this section:—'that recently at the bar, in a court of law, its precise meaning perplexed plaintiff and defendant, and their counsel.' It is of the very nature of an interjection, that it eludes the meshes of a definition.

It was Goldsmith who first gave this interjection a literary currency. Mr. Forster, speaking of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, recognises the elasticity of the interjectional function :

‘There never was a book in which indulgence and charity made virtue look so lustrous. Nobody is strait-laced; if we except Miss Carolina Wilhelmia Amelia Skeggs, whose pretensions are summed up in Burchell’s noble monosyllable.

“Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price; but where is that to be found?”

“Fudge.”

**208. Hail.** Here we have the case of an adjective which has become an interjection. It is a very old salutation, being found not only in Anglo-Saxon, but also in Old High Dutch. In the early examples it always appears grammatically as an adjective of health joined with the verb ‘to be’ in the imperative. In the Saxon Version of the Gospels, Luke i. 28, ‘Hal wæs ƿu,’ Hale be thou! and in the plural, Matt. xxviii. 9, ‘Hale wese ge,’ Hale be ye!

**All hail.** This also was at first purely adjectival, as in the following from Layamon, which is quoted and translated above, 47 :—

‘al hal me makien  
mid haleweize drenchen.’

By the sixteenth century this ‘all hail!’ had become a worshipful salutation, and having lost all construction, was completely interjectionalised.

‘Did they not sometime cry *All* bayle to me?’

Shakspeare, *Richard II*, iv. 1.

The pronunciation is iambic; the *All* being enclitic, and the stress on *hayle*, as if the whole were a disyllable. We sometimes hear it otherwise uttered in Matthew xxviii. 9, as if *All* meant *omnes*, πάντες; instead of being merely adverbial, *omnino*, πάντως. It does not indeed in that place

represent any separate word at all, the original being simply *Xaipere*. In the Vulgate it is *Avele*; and this is rendered by Wiclif *Heil* &c. Tyndal was the first who introduced this *All hayle* into the English version. The Geneva translators substituted for it *God saue you*. 204.

209. A remarkable example of a phrase which has passed into the interjectional state is **Hallelujah**, or in its Greek aspect **Alleluia**; meaning, Praise ye the Lord. This is a world-wide interjection of religious fervour; and it may safely be said of those who use it, that not one in a thousand understands it grammatically, or misunderstands it interjectionally.

210. But the example which holds the most conspicuous historical position, is the great congregational interjection of faith, the universal response of the Christian Church as well as of the Hebrew Synagogue, **Amen**. This word, at first in Hebrew a verbal adjective, and thence an affirmative adverb, signifying verily, truly, yea, was used in the early times of the Jewish Church (Deut. xxvii. 15; Ps. xli. 14, lxxii. 19, lxxxix. 53) for the people's response: 'and let the people say AMEN.' It was continued from the first in the Christian community, as we know from 1 Cor. xiv. 16, and is still in use in every body of Christians. For the most part it has been preserved in its original Hebrew form of AMEN; but the French Protestants have substituted for it a translation in the vulgar tongue, and they do not respond with AMEN, but with *Ainsi-soit-il*, *So be it*<sup>1</sup>. They have by this change limited this ancient interjection to one of its several functions. For in this modern form it is only adapted to be a response to prayer, or the expression of some desire.

There are other sorts of assent and affirmation for which

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<sup>1</sup> I am informed that the Freemasons have a time-honoured rendering of their own: *So mote it be!*

AMEN is serviceable, besides that single one of desire or aspiration. In mediæval wills it was put at the head of the document *In the name of God AMEN*. This was a protestation of earnestness on the part of the testator, and a claim on all whom it might concern to respect his dispositions.

In Jeremiah xxviii. 6 we find one AMEN delivered by the prophet with the wishful meaning only, while there is an ominous reserve of assent.

In the Commination Service, the Amens to the denunciations are not expressions of desire that evil may overtake the wicked, but the solemn acknowledgment of a liability to which they are subject; as the preliminary instruction sets forth the intent wherefore 'ye should answer to every sentence, *Amen*.' In this place *Amen* cannot be rendered by So be it; and the attempt to substitute any grammatical phrase in place of it must rob it of some of its symbolic power. This is the case with all interjections, and it is of the essence of an interjection that it should be so.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF THE PARTS OF SPEECH.

211. PHILOLOGY seeks to penetrate into the Nature of language: Grammar is concerned only with its literary Habits.

Grammatical analysis is the dissection of speech as the instrument of literature. The student may help himself to remember this by observing that *Grammaticæ* (γραμματική) is derived from the Greek word for literature, γράμματα.

The chief result of grammar, and the exponent of grammatical analysis, is the doctrine of the Parts of Speech. All the words which combine to make up structural language are classified in this systematic division. But the philologist should observe that the quality of words, whereby they are so distinguished and divided into Parts of Speech, is a habit, and not anything innate or grounded in the nature of the words. We shall endeavour to make this plain.

Grammar analyses language in order to ascertain the conditions on which the faculty of expression is dependent, and also to gain more control over that faculty. This object limits the range of grammatical enquiry. The grammarian makes a certain number of groups to which he can refer any word, and then he forms rules in which he legislates class-wise for the words so grouped.

We must here assume that the ordinary grammatical knowledge is already in the possession of the reader. To

be able to designate each word as such or such a part of speech, and to practise the rules for combining parts of speech together, is the ordinary task of grammar. The determination of the part of speech is the barrier beyond which grammar does not (generally speaking) pursue the analysis. Although what is called Parsing, or assigning words to their parts, is a juvenile exercise, yet it is nevertheless the surest test of a person's having learnt that which grammar has to teach; especially if he can do it in the English sentence. For it is easier to do in Latin. A boy may be quite ignorant of the meaning of a Latin sentence, and of each word in it; and yet he may be able to answer that *navabat*, for example, is a verb in the active voice, imperfect tense, indicative mood. He knows this from having learnt the forms of the Latin verb, and he knows the ending *-abat* for the verbal form of that voice, tense, and mood. Such knowledge is but formal and mechanical. If, however, in parsing English, he meets the verb *loved*, he cannot venture to pronounce what part of the verb it is by a mere look at the form. It may be the indicative, or the subjunctive, or it may be the participle. Which it is he can only tell by understanding the phrase in which it stands.

212. Throughout the Latin language the words are to a very great extent grammatically ticketed. In the English language the same thing exists, but in a very slight degree. In Latin, the part of speech is most readily determined by regard to the form, and it is only occasionally that attention to the structure becomes necessary. Parsing in Latin is therefore mainly an exercise in what is called the Accidence, that is, the grammatical inflections of words. In English, on the contrary, there is so little to be gathered by looking at the mere form, that the exercise of parsing trains the mind to a habit of judging each word's value by reference to its

yoke-fellows in the sentence. A single example will make this plain. It would be a foolish question to ask, without reference to a context, What part of speech is *love*? because it may stand either for a verb or for a noun. But if you ask in Latin, What part of speech is *amare* or *caritas*? the question can be answered as well without a context as with. Each word has in fact a bit of context attached to it, for an inflection is simply a fragment of context, and a nominative is as much an inflection as a genitive. This is the cause why it is easier to catch the elements of grammatical ideas through the medium of a highly inflected language like Latin. On the other hand, those ideas can best be perfected through the medium of a language with few inflections, like English. For in studying grammar through the English language, we purge our minds of the wooden notion that it is an inherent quality in a word to be of this or that part of speech.

213. To be a noun, or a verb, or an adjective, is a function which the word discharges in such and such a context, and not a character innate in the word or inseparable from it. Thus the word *save* is a verb, whether infinitive *to save*, or indicative *I save*, or imperative *save me*: but it is the self-same word when it stands as a preposition, 'forty stripes save one.'

The force of these observations is not lessened by the fact that there are many words in English that discharge but one function, and are of one part of speech only. In such cases the Habit of the word has become fixed, it has lost the plastic state which is the original and natural condition of every word, and it has contracted a rigid and invariable character. The bulk of Latin words are in this state, simply because they are not pure words at all, but fragments of a phrase. Each Latin word has its function as noun or verb or adverb ticketed upon it. But in English the words

of fixed habit are comparatively few. In a general way it may be said that the pronouns are so in all languages. Yet even this group, of all groups the most habit-bound, is not without its occasional assertions of natural freedom. The prepositions are many of them in the fixed state, but the researches of the philologist tend to set many of them in a freer light. We must not therefore regard the parts of speech as if they were like the parts of a dissected map, where each piece is unfit to stand in any place but one. Each part of speech is what it is, either by virtue of the place it now occupies in the present sentence; or else, by virtue of an old habit which contracted its use to certain special positions. The inflected word carries both position and habit about with it, in that very inflection by which its function is limited because its grammatical relations are determined.

214. Before we proceed to the examples which will illustrate these remarks, we must make a clearance of one thing which else might cause confusion. There is a sense in which every word in the world is a noun. When we speak of the word *have*, or the word *marry*, these words are regarded as objects of sense, and are mere nouns. Just in the same way in the expression 'the letter A,' this alphabetic symbol becomes a noun. In this aspect each item in the whole catalogue of letters and words in a dictionary is presented to our minds as a noun. And beyond the pages of the dictionary, there are situations in the course of conversation and of literature in which this is the case. Thus, in Shakspeare, *King John*, i. 1, 'Have is have;' and in Longfellow's

'Mother, what does marry mean?'

In these cases the word is (as one may say) taken up



between the finger and thumb, and looked at, and made an object of. It is no longer, as words commonly are, a symbol of some object or idea in the mind's meaning, i. e. subjective; it enters for the moment into an objective position of its own. There are many instances of this.

*Must* is a verb. But when we hear the popular saying, 'Oh! you must, must you? *Must* is made for the Queen'—here *must* is a noun.

This 'objective' citation of words being cleared away, it remains now to consider how words may change their subjective condition, that is to say, their relation to the thinking mind, and vary their characters as parts of speech accordingly.

215. And first, the verb may become a substantive, as—

'To err is human, to forgive divine.'

'To live in hearts we leave behind,  
Is not to die.'

Thomas Campbell, *Hallowed Ground*.

The word *handicap* is an old Saxon noun meaning a compromise or bargain, and in this character, I suppose, it figures in the technical language of horse-racing. It is odd that this notorious expression has never been included in our dictionaries. I have searched Richardson, Webster,<sup>1</sup> and Latham, in vain. This sporting substantive signifies the extra weight which horses carry as a compensation for any advantage they may have in respect of age. It frequently stands for a verb, as in the following from a contemporary journal.

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<sup>1</sup> I had, however, not looked into the latest edition within my reach, which is that of Drs. Goodrich and Porter, for there the word is, and is very adequately treated; bearing its testimony to the faithful labours of the editors.

‘The legitimate objects of the Trades’ Unions are overlaid by elaborate attempts to handicap ability and industry, and to exclude competition.’

216. Further examples of the functional interchange between substantive and verb :—

‘With all good grace to grace a gentleman.’

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii. 4.

‘Psalm us no psalms.’

Charles Kingsley, *The Saint’s Tragedy*, v. 3.

‘In 1811 the Swedes, though not yet actually at war with England, were making active preparations for defence by sea and land, “in case,” says Parry, “we should be inclined to Copenhagen them.”’—*Memoirs of Sir W. E. Parry*, by his Son, ch. ii.

‘I’ll prose it here, I’ll verse it there,  
And picturesque it everywhere.’

William Combe, *Doctor Syntax in search of the Picturesque*, Canto i.

Passing to more familiar and trivial instances, such as are (be it remembered) the best examples of the unfettered and natural action of a language, we hear such expressions as ‘to *cab*le a message ;’ and again, ‘If such a thing happens, *wire* me.’

I do not say that these expressions have become an acknowledged part of the language. If we confined our attention solely to that which is mature and established, we should act like a botanist who never studied buds, or a physiologist who neglected those phenomena which are peculiar to young things. Young sprigs of language have a levity and skittishness which render them unworthy of literature and grammar, but which make an exhibition of the highest value for the purposes of philology. There are many movements that are natural and that are among the best guides to the student of nature, which are discontinued with staid age. It is a main character of philology as contrasted with grammar that

it is unconfined by literary canons, and that the whole realm of speech is within its province.

217. To such an extent does the language exert this faculty of verbifying a substantive, that even where there is already by the ancient development of the language a verb and a noun of the same stem, it will sometimes drop the established verb, and make a new verb by preference out of the noun. Thus we have the verb *to graff*, and the noun *graff*. But we have dropped the proper verb *graff* and have made a new verb out of the substantive. Everybody now talks of *graffing*, and says *to graff*, and we never hear of *to graff* except in church.

The pronoun can be used as a verb, thus—

‘Taunt him with the license of Inke: if thou thou’st him some thrice, it shall not be amisse.’—*Twelve Night*, iii. 2, 42.

The substantive becomes an adjective. This is so common in our language that examples are offered not so much to establish the fact as to identify and verify it. *Main* is a well-known old Saxon substantive, which appears in its original character in such an expression as ‘might and main;’ but it becomes an adjective in ‘main force,’ or in this:—

‘And on their heads  
Main promontories flung.’

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 654.

We have an example of a different kind in the word *cheap*. This originally was a substantive, meaning market, and the expression ‘good cheap’ meant to say that a person had made a good marketing, just as the French *bon marché* (from which it was in fact derived) still does. While it went with an adjective harnessed to it, it was manifestly regarded as a substantive. But since we no more speak of ‘good cheap’; since we have changed it to ‘very cheap’; and since the

word has taken the degrees of *cheaper* and *cheapest*,—its adjectival character is established beyond question.

218. The adjective becomes a substantive. In such expressions as 'the young and the old,' 'the good and the bad,' 'the rich and the poor,' 'the high and the low,' 'the strong and the weak,' we have adjectives used substantively. The adjective employed substantively sometimes takes the plural form; and then it is impossible to deny it the quality of a substantive; for the adjective has no plural form in English grammar. Therefore the words *irrationals* and *comestibles* in the following quotations, though adjectives by form and extraction, must be called grammatical substantives, not only on account of their substantival use, but also by reason of their grammatical form.

'Irrationals all sorrow are beneath.'

Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, v. 538.

'What thousands of homes there are in which the upholstery is excellent, the comestibles costly, and the grand piano unexceptionable, both for cabinet work and tone, in which not a readable book is to be found in secular literature.'—*Intellectual Observer*, October, 1866.

So the adjective *worthy* has become a substantive when we speak of *a worthy* and *the worthies*. Other grammatical structures, besides plurality, may demonstrate that an adjective must be acknowledged for a substantive. We call *contemporary* an adjective in the connection *contemporary with*; but it is a noun when we say *a contemporary of*. The word *good* considered by itself would be called an adjective, but it is an acknowledged substantive, not only in the plural form *goods*, but also in such a construction as 'the good of the land of Egypt,' Genesis xlv. 18.

And specially must the whilom adjective be called a substantive when it is suited with an adjective of its own.

The adjectives *ancient*, *preventive*, must be parsed as substantives in the following quotations:—

‘Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head.’—Goldsmith, *Dedication of the Deserted Village*.

‘Those sanitary measures which experience has shown to be the best preventive.’—*Queen’s Speech*, 1867.

219. The same changeableness of grammatical character may be seen in the adverb. The commonest form of the adverb, namely *-ly*, was made out of an adjective, which was made out of a substantive; as will be fully explained below in the section on the Adverb. A substantive may suddenly by a vigorous stroke of art be transformed into an adverb, as *forest* in the following passage:—

‘Twas a lay  
More subtle-cadenced, more forest wild  
Than Dryope’s lone lulling of her child.’

John Keats, *Endymion*.

In the following line the word *ill* appears first as an adverb and secondly as a substantive:—

‘Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey.’

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*.

The same word may appear as an adverb or as a conjunction. The word *but* sustains these two characters in one line,—

‘His yeares but young, but his experience old.’

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii. 4.

Sometimes the employment of one and the same word in a diversity of grammatical powers leads to a modification of the form of the word. The old preposition *ðurh* has come to be employed as an adjective, in ‘a thorough draught,’ or, as in the following quotation:—

‘These two critics, Bentley and Lachmann, were thorough masters of their craft.’—Dr. Lightfoot, *Galatians*, Preface.

It has been a modern consequence of this adjectival use of *thorough*, that a different form has been established for the preposition, viz. *through*. But this variety of form does not interfere with the justice of the statement that here we have had the same word in two grammatical characters.

220. How easily the offices of preposition and conjunction glide into each other may be seen from one or two examples. In the Scotch motto, 'Touch not the cat but the glove,' *but* is the old preposition signifying without. This is the character and signification which it had in early times, and from which the better known uses of *but* are derivative. If, however, we expand this sentence a little without alteration to its sense, and write it thus—'Touch not the cat but first put on the glove,' we perceive that *but* is no longer a preposition—it has become a conjunction. In the sentence, 'I saw nobody else but him,' *but* is a preposition: if, however, it be expressed thus, 'I saw nobody else, but I saw him,' *but* is a conjunction.

In the following quotation we have *for* in the two characters of conjunction and preposition:—

'For for these things every friend will depart.'—*Eccclus.* xxii. 22.

In the sentence, 'I will attend to no one before you,' *before* is a preposition. But if the same thing be thus worded, 'I will attend to no one before I have attended to you,' *before* is a conjunction.

In the sentence, 'He behaved like a scoundrel,' *like* is a preposition. But if we say it in provincial English, thus, 'He behaved like a scoundrel would,' *like* is a conjunction.

221. *While* was once a noun, signifying *time*. Indeed it is so still, as *a long while*. But it is better known as a conjunction: thus—

'It is very well established that one man may steal a horse while another may not so much as look over the hedge.'

*As* is generally called a conjunction, but in the combination *such as* it is rather a relative pronoun than a conjunction; and it bears distinctly its old character of a relative pronoun in the following quotation:—

'As far as I can see, 'tis them as is done wrong to as is so sorry and penitent and all that, and them as wrongs is as comferble as ever they can stick.'—*Lettice Lisle*, ch. xxvii.

In quoting a passage of this sort, I am liable I know to be challenged as if I had produced an arbitrary or unauthoritative illustration. But for me it is authority enough to know that this way of speaking is used by millions of speakers. And the present is a case in which the dialect supplies a link which the central language has lost. Herein lies the difference between a grammatical and a philological illustration, that the former requires literary authority, the latter only existence, as its warrant. I grant that if in any writing of my own I adopted this use of *as*, I might be justly confronted with the demand for my 'authority.' If I declined the challenge, and continued to use the expression, it would amount to a trial of strength on my part whether I had the power to get this provincialism accepted, or at least permitted. Occasionally a strange expression is admitted, but the privilege of ushering it belongs chiefly to those lawful lords of literature, the poets. I am under the ordinary rules of grammar in my composition, but not in my illustrations. Why, indeed, the best facts of language often lie beyond these formal props that fence the park of literature! Therefore I trust that the benevolent reader will not cavil about authority, but gratefully acknowledge the

help which the dialects supply towards a completer view of our language.

We will conclude this list of interchangeable functions by the remark that the interjection shares in this faculty of transformation. It may become a verb, as when we say 'to pooh-pooh a question;' or a noun, as—

'Many *bems* passed between them, now the uncle looking on the nephew, now the nephew on the uncle.'—Sir Charles Grandison, *Letter* xvi.

Or, as in the following from Cowper:—

'Where thou art gone,  
*Adieus* and *farewells* are a sound unknown.'

222. The difference of function which one and the same word may perform, often furnishes the ground of a playful turn of expression, something like a pun. But it is distinct from a pun, is more subtle, and is allowed to constitute the point of an epigram, as in that of Mrs. Jane Brereton on Beau Nash's full-length picture being placed between the busts of Newton and Pope:—

'This picture placed these busts between,  
Gives satire its full strength;  
Wisdom and wit are little seen,  
But folly at full length.'

This is a play on two functions of the word *little*, which must here be thought of as adjective and adverb at once, i. e. (in Latin) as equal at once to *exigui*, small, and to *parum*, seldom. For want of attention to this, the line has been erroneously edited thus:—

'Wisdom and wit are seldom seen.'

If any one wishes for more illustrations of this fact, that the grammatical character of a word is only a habit—one



actual habit out of many possible ones—he should consider some of the following references to Shakspeare.

- Winter's Tale*, i. 1. 28, *vast* (substantive).  
                                   2. 50, *verily*.  
                                   ii. 3. 63, *band*.  
*Richard II*, ii. 3. 86, *uncle me no uncle*.  
                                   v. 3. 139, *dogge*.  
 1 *Henry IV*, i. 3. 76, *so*.  
 2 *Henry IV*, i. 3. 37, *indeed* (verb).  
                                   iv. 1. 71, *there* (nounized).  
*Henry V*, iv. 3. 63, *gentle* (verb).  
                                   5. 17, *friend* (verb).

223. These examples all point to the one conclusion that the quality of speech-part-ship (if the expression may be for once admitted), is not a fixed and absolute one, but subject to and dependent upon the relations of each word to the other words with which it is forming a sentence. If we have recourse, for example's sake, to those languages which have preserved their grammar in the most primitive and rudimentary condition, we find that each word has retained its natural faculty for discharging all the functions of the parts of speech.

In Chinese there is no formal distinction between a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb, a preposition. The same root, according to its position in a sentence, may be employed to convey the meaning of great, greatness, greatly, and to be great. Everything in fact depends in Chinese on the proper collocation of words in a sentence. Between this state of things and the development of the modern languages, there has intervened the flectional state of speech, of which the grammatical character is as nearly as possible the direct opposite to that which has been stated concerning the

Chinese. In the flectional state of language, each word carries about with it a formal mark of distinction, by which the habitual vocation of that word is known. Thus in Greek the word *πόνος*, even standing alone, bears the aspect of being a noun in the nominative case ; but the English word *labour*, standing alone, is no more a noun than it is a verb, and no more a verb than it is a noun. The flectional languages are not all equally flectional; this character has its degrees. The Greek is not so rigidly flectional as the Latin. But both of them are far more so than any of the languages of modern Europe. Of the great languages, that which has most shaken off inflections is the English, and next to the English, the French. We have but a very few inflections remaining in our language. This increases the freedom with which the language may be handled. We are recovering some of that long-lost and infantine elasticity which was the property of primitive speech.

224. But while the modern languages, and English especially, are casting off that cocoon of inflections which the habits of thousands of years had gradually swathed about them, there is no possibility of their getting back to a Chinese state of verbal homogeneousness. Such a state is incompatible with a high condition of development. A language of which no part has any fixed character must rank low among languages, just as among animals those which have no distinction of flesh, bone, sinew, or hair. Or, as in communities of men, division of labour, distinct vocations, and all the concomitant rigidity of individual habit, is necessary to advanced civilisation.

There is no appearance of a tendency to fall back into a primitive state of language. The freedom which modern languages are asserting for themselves as against the restraints of flexion, may be carried out to its extremest issues,

and no appearance would ever arise of a tendency backwards to a state of pulpy homogeneousness. For there is a movement from which there is no going back, a slow but incessant movement, which gradually creates a distinction among words greater and more deeply seated than that of the parts of speech. This is a movement in which all languages partake more or less, according to the vigour of intellectual life with which they are animated. This is a movement which rears barriers of distinction between one and another class of words as immoveable as the sea-wall which the sea itself has sometimes built to sever the pasture from the bed of the ocean. The explanation of this movement must occupy another chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

### OF PRESENTIVE AND SYMBOLIC WORDS AND OF INFLECTIONS.

**225.** PHILOLOGY makes more use of the signification of words than grammar does. For grammar deals only with the literary forms, functions, and habits of words; philology deals with the very words themselves. Grammar regards words as the instruments of literature: philology regards them as the exponents of mind. Philology has to do with language in its fullest sense, as being that whole compound thing which is made up of voice and meaning, sound and signification, written form and associated idea.

It appertains to philology to omit none of the phenomena of language, but to give them all their due consideration. Hence it comes to pass that the outward and the inward, the form and the signification, will come by turns under review. And though the inward or mental side of language will occupy less of our space than its correlative, yet each reference to it will be more in the nature of a reference to principle, and will score its results deeper on our whole method of proceeding.

As we advance, the subject grows upon our hands. We cannot treat of our native language in a philological manner without getting down to some fundamental principles. In the present work we began like a botanist with the flower; but the progress of the enquiry leads in due time through

the whole economy of the plant, and will at length bring us to its root. While we dwelt over the historical circumstances in the midst of which our language expanded to the light, while we noted the source from which it was supplied with alphabetic characters, while we surveyed its spelling and pronunciation, and its homely interjections, we were acting like a botanist examining successive florets of the multitudinous head of some grassy inflorescence. But now we move down the stalk which bears many such florets, and we have to admit principles which embrace the systems of many languages. At this point we enter upon the very heart of the subject; and the growing importance of the matter makes me fear lest I should fail in the exposition of it. All things cannot be rendered equally easy for the student, and I must here ask him to lend me the vigour of his attention while I try to expound that upon which will hinge much of the meaning of chapters to come.

226. There is a distinction in the signification of words which calls for primary attention in philology. I would ask the reader to contemplate such words as *spade, heron, hand-saw, flag-staff, barn-door*; and then to turn his mind to such as the following, *a, an, by, but, else, even, for, from, he, how, I, it, if, in, not, never, on, over, since, the, therefore, they, under, who, where, yet, you*. It will be at once felt that there is a gulf between these two sorts of words, and that there must be a natural distinction between them.

The one set presents objects to the mind, the other does not. Some of them, such as the pronouns, continue to reflect an object once presented, as *John he*. But there is a difference in nature between the word *John* and the word *he*. If I say *at Jerusalem . . . there*, the word *Jerusalem* belongs to the one class, and the words *at, there*, belong to the other.

227. We will call these two classes of words by the names of PRESENTIVE and SYMBOLIC.

The Presentive are those which present an object to the memory or to the imagination; or, in brief, which present any conception to the mind. For the things presented need not be objects of sense, as in the first list of examples. The words *justice, patience, clemency, fairy, elf, spirit, abstraction, generalization, classification*, are as presentive as any words can be. The only point of difference between these and those is one that does not belong to philology. It is the difference of minds. There are people to whom some of the latter words would have no meaning, and therefore would not be presentive. But every word is supposed by the philologer to carry its requisite condition of mind with it.

The Symbolic words are those which by themselves present no meaning to any mind, and which depend for their intelligibility on a relation to some presentive word or words. We enter not at present into the question how they became so dependent; we take our stand on the fact. Whether they can be shown to be mere altered specimens of the presentive class, or whether there is room to imagine in any case that they have had a source of their own, independent of the presentives,—the difference exists, and is most palpable. And the more we attend to it, the more shall we find that broad results are attainable from the study of this distinction.

228. What, for example, is the joke in such a question as that which has afforded a moment's amusement to many generations of youth, *Who dragged whom round what and where?* except this, that symbols which stand equally for any person, any thing, or any place, are rendered ludicrous by being employed as if they presented to the mind some par-

ticular person, some particular thing, or some particular place. The question is rather unsubstantial, simply because the words are symbolic where they should be presentive. It is not utterly unsubstantial, because the verb *dragged round* is presentive. Put a more symbolic verb in its stead and you have a perfectly unsubstantial question: *Who did what, and where did he do it?*

And here it may be desirable to attempt some understanding of the nature of this difference between presentiveness and symbolism. The danger of confusion lies chiefly in the fact that all language is symbolical. As the chief characteristic of human language in regard to its external form is this, that it should be articulate; so, in regard to its signification, the chief characteristic is that it should be symbolical. If a man barks like a dog or crows like a cock, or whistles, these utterances do not constitute language in any sense useful for our present purpose, even though they might carry a real signification, and might in conceivable situations be necessary as means of communication between man and man. They might upon occasion serve the purpose of language; but they would not be language. But when the bark of the dog is represented in articulate syllables, as *bow-wow*, there is an important step made towards the attainment of complete language. 'Bow-wow,' says the dog; and this *bow-wow*, in the human mouth may pass for speech, but it is not yet a true specimen of the relation in which mature speech stands to meaning. When however we advance another step, and call the dog a bow-wow, here we have language. A childish specimen, it is true; but still a real specimen of language. And the character which determines it is Symbolism. An understanding is established between minds that this articulate imitation of a dog's bark shall stand in human inter-

course as the sign or symbol of a dog. And there is such a movement in language that, although at first bow-wow signified a bark, and so was a mere sound-word, yet it would be likely to move on a step and mean something else, as it actually has come to be used symbolically for a dog. Thus language is radically symbolical.

This fundamental truth is however overlaid and concealed from view by a mental habit which we call Association. We became acquainted with objects and ideas at the same time that we learnt how to name them, and the names have become so intimately identified with the things, that it is only by force of reflection we can verify their symbolic nature: This associative faculty is limited to words which express objects and ideas. When words express neither objects nor ideas they cannot be so associated; and their symbolic character is then patent, because it is their only character; insomuch that if it be fairly looked at, it must be immediately recognised. The difference then between the Presentive and the Symbolic words, is based, not upon the absence of symbolism in the former, but upon the absence of the presentive faculty in the latter, which leaves their unmixed symbolic character open to view.

When therefore we call a particular set of words Symbolic, we mean that they display in a clear and conspicuous manner that symbolism which is a characteristic of all human language. And they display it in such a manner as to bear a great testimony to the fact that the symbolic tendency is infused into human language with its earliest germ. As a natural consequence of this innate tendency, there is developed in language a graduated series of elevations from the sensible and material to the ethereal and subtle.

Such is the best explanation I can offer of this great



distinction. Whatever be the value of the explanation, we must observe that it affects in no way either the fact of the distinction or the fact of its importance. These are to be established not by theory, but by evidence and exemplification: and to these we now proceed.

Analogous movements may be traced in examples beyond the pale of language. When barbers' poles were first erected, they were pictorial and presentive, for they indicated by white bands of paint the linen bandages which were used in blood-letting, an operation practised by the old surgeon-barbers. In our time we only know (speaking of the popular mind) that the pole indicates a barber's shop, but why or how is unknown. And this is symbolism.

The twelve signs of the zodiac are expressed by two sets of figures, the one presentive of a ram, a bull, a crab, &c., the other set only symbolical of the same, with a traceable relationship between the symbols and the pictures.

**229.** A highly appropriate illustration may be gathered from the letters of the Alphabet. The letter *A* once was a picture, and it represented a bull's head, according to some, or an eagle according to others. The ancient name of the letter, *Aleph*, in Hebrew (whence *Alpha* in Greek) signifies a bull. Now it has long ago ceased to picture either this animal or the other, and we are in the habit of calling it a Symbol of the vowel-sound with which the name of each animal began.

The consonant *B* was once a picture of a house, and that is the meaning of its Hebrew name *Beth*, whence the Greek name *Beta*. In like manner *D* is an old picture of a door, which is the sense of its name *Daleth* in Hebrew, whence the Greek name *Delta*. These two consonants (like the vowel above) have long ago lost all but an archæological connection with the objects they once pictured, and they are now

the mere symbols of the consonantal sounds which were initial to the names of the represented objects. And so through the whole Alphabet. It began in presentation and has reached a state of symbolism.

230. Writing is in fact the symbolism of the picture-story. Here we perceive that there has been a complete change of nature. The pictorial character with which the first artist invested the figure has gradually and undesignedly evaporated from that figure, and has left a mere vague phantom of a character in its place, a thing which is the representative of nothing. And if we set the gain against the loss of such a transition, we find that the symbol has gained enormously in range, to make up for what it has lost in local or pictorial force. While it was presentive it was tied to a single object: since it became a symbol, it is ubiquitous in its function.

But it is to be observed further—and the observation is of wider application—that the symbol which remains after the evaporation of the pictorial element of the hieroglyphic or picture-writing is the true correspondent to the intention with which the first effort was made at representing speech by the graphic art. Whatever there was in the picture which was germane to the intention has lived, while the alien parts have gradually died away, leaving behind the purely symbolic or alphabetical writing.

These observations will apply also in some degree to our two systems of numeration, the Roman and the Arabic. The numerals I and II and III and IIII are presentive of the ideas of one and two and three and four, as truly as the holding up of so many fingers would represent those numbers. The numeral V is practically a mere symbol, though it began in presentation, if it be true that it is derived from the hand, the thumb forming the one side, and the four fingers the

other. The figures 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 are and always were pure symbols. It is worthy of observation, that the whole system of Decimal Arithmetic hinges upon these symbolic figures, or has acquired immense addition to its range of capabilities by the use of these figures. So in like manner will it be found by and bye, that the modern development of languages has hinged mainly upon symbolic words, and that their instrumentality has been the chief means of what progress has been made in the capabilities of expression.

231. The same general tendency which makes symbols take the place of pictures, makes or has made symbolic words take the place of presentives in a great number of instances. This tendency has led to the formation out of the large mass of presentive verbs of a select number of symbolic verbs, which are the light and active intermediaries, and the general servants of the presentive verbs. Thus the verbs partake of both characters, the presentive and the symbolic. But as regards the rest of the parts of speech, they fall into two natural halves under the influence of this distinction. The substantives, adjectives, and adverbs are presentive words; the pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions are symbolic words.

But as the grammatical classification has become rigid in some of its parts, it must not be allowed to govern the natural divisions which we are here seeking to establish. There is much of what is arbitrary in the denomination assigned by grammarians to many a word. Dictionaries and grammars are not quite at one on this head. Some will think perhaps that my symbolic words are found to invade the domain of noun, adjective, and adverb; while they fail to cover and fully occupy what I have assigned to them—namely, the pronoun, conjunction, and preposition.

Therefore the grammatical scheme should not be trusted to as a frame for the new division. The student must seize the distinction itself; and the illustration of it by reference to the grammatical scale is only offered as a temporary assistance.

As in the chapter Of the Parts of Speech we saw that the same word assumes a diversity of characters, so here also the same word will 'be at one time presentive and at another time symbolic. And there is perhaps no more effective display of the distinction now before us than that which shews itself within the limits of the history of single words. Let us therefore take a few examples of the transition of a word from a presentive to a symbolic use.

**232. Thing.** This is a very good example, on account of its unmixed simpleness. For it is almost purely symbolic, and devoid of presentive power. It is still more. It is of universal application in its symbolic power. There is not a subject of speech which may not be indicated by the word *thing*. This will be acknowledged upon consideration of such a passage as the following :—

'By these ways, as by the testimony of the creature, we come to find an eternal and independent Being, upon which all things else depend, and by which all things else are governed.'—John Pearson, *An Exposition of the Creed*, Art. I.

It is plain that we cannot name a creature, whether visible or invisible, whether an object of sense or of thought, which may not be indicated by the word *thing*. It is therefore of universal application in its symbolical power.<sup>1</sup>

But if we ask, on the other hand, What idea does this word present? we answer, None! There is no creature,

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<sup>1</sup> The few instances in which *thing* (with a faint rhetorical emphasis) is opposed to *person*, are to be regarded as stranded relics on the path of the transition which the bulk of the word has passed through.

no subject of speech or of thought, which can claim the word *thing* as its presenter. There was a time when the word was presentive like any ordinary noun, but that time is now far behind us. The most recent example I am able to quote is of the fourteenth century.

In Chaucer's *Prologue* it occurs twice presentively :—

'He wolde the see were kept for any thyng  
Bitwixen Myddelburgh and Orewelle.' (l. 278.)

'Ther to he koude endite and make a thyng.' (l. 327.)

**233.** The fullness of tone which the rhythm requires for the word *thyng* in both these places, is by itself almost enough to indicate that they are not to be taken as when we say 'I would not do it for anything,' or 'Here's a thing will do.' In these trivial instances the word is vague and symbolical, but it would hardly have beseemed such a poet as Chaucer to bring the stroke of his measure down upon such gossamer. The Merchant desired that the sea should be protected for the sake of commerce at any price, condition, or cost—on any terms; for such is the old sense of the word *thing*. The old verb *to thing*, Saxon *þingian*, meant to make terms, to compromise, *pacisci*. So also in German the word *Ding* had a like use, as may be seen through its compounds. The verb *bebingen* is to stipulate, bargain; and *Bebingung* is condition, terms of agreement, contract.

In Denmark and Norway the word still retains its presentiveness, and signifies a judicial or deliberative assembly. In Denmark the places where the judges hold session are called *Ting*. In Norway the Parliament is called *Stor Ting*, that is, Great Thing. In Iceland the assembling place is called *Thing-valla*, and the hill in the Isle of Man from which the laws are proclaimed is called *Tynwald*. The

same word in the same sense is contained in the Danish word *husting*, as Longfellow indicates by his manner of printing it:—

‘Olaf the King, one summer morn,  
Blew a blast on his bugle-horn,  
Sending his signal through the land of Drontheim.

And to the Hus-Ting held at Mere  
Gathered the farmers far and near,  
With their war weapons ready to con ront him.’

*The Saga of King Olaf.*

In Molbech’s Danish Dictionary there is a list of compounds with Ting, in its presentive value of adjudicating or adjusting conflicting interests.

In such a sense it is said by Chaucer that his Sergeaunt of Lawe could endite and make a THYNG, meaning, he could make a contract, was a good conveyancer.

234. How wide is the separation between such a use of the word and that more familiar one which meets us so often in this manner, ‘The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand’—in which ‘liberal things’ is equivalent to ‘liberality,’ or at any rate the difference between the general and the abstract is so fine that, if preserved at all, it requires a high metaphysical discernment to define it.

A question may be raised here—What part of speech is this symbolic *thing*? Grammar, which looks only to its literary action, will say it is a noun, and that however much it may have changed in sense, it cannot cease to be a noun. Yet it will often be found to act the part and fill the place of pronouns in the classic tongues. The Latin neuter pronouns *hæc*, *ea*, *ista*, their Greek analogues *ταῦτα*, *ἐκείνα*, *τοιαῦτα*, *τοσαῦτα*, can hardly be rendered in English in any other way than by the expressions *these things*, *those things*, *such things*, *so great things*. If in all cases we must gram-

matically insist that *thing* is a noun, then what part of speech are *something*, *nothing*, *anything*, *everything*? It may be a question at what stage of symbolism a noun passes over to the ranks of the pronoun, but it appears plain that there is a point at which this transition must be admitted, and that the whole question turns upon the degree of symbolism that is requisite. If the word *thing* has not quite attained that degree, it must be allowed that it approaches very near to it.

It would not have been worth while to dwell so long on these aspects, if they had not been typical. But that they are so we may assure ourselves, both by observation of the same tendency in other languages, and also in other words of our own language. In Latin *res* and *causa* have moved on a like path, and have generated *rien* and *chose* in French. In German the word *Ding* has had the same history, except that its field has been narrowed by the rival word *Sache*, a word of forensic origin, like *causa* and *thing*, and familiar to us through the old Saxon legal jargon, 'sac and soc.' In Hebrew *DABHAR* had a like career: as a presentive it meant 'word,' as a symbolic it signified 'thing.' A variety of words in English have partially moved in the same direction, and have attained a symbolic use in certain connections. Let the student consider the following substantives, and probably he will be able to fit most of them to phrases in which they figure symbolically:—*account*, *affair*, *behalf*, *business*, *circumstance*, *concern*, *deal*, *matter*, *part*, *question*, *regard*, *respect*, *wise*. ♦

**235. Will, would; shall, should.** The word *shall* offers a good example of the movement from presentiveness to symbolism. When it flourished as a presentive word, it signified to *owe*. Of this ancient state of the word a memorial exists in the German adjective *schuldig*, indebted. From this state it passed by slow and unperceived move-

ments to that sense which is now most familiar to us, in which it is a verbal auxiliary, charging the verb with a sense fluctuating between the future tense and the imperative mood.

How greatly the word *will* is felt to have lost presentive power in the last three centuries may be judged from the following. In Matthew xv. 32, where our Bible has 'I will not send them away fasting,' it is proposed by Dean Alford as a correction to render 'I am not willing to.' Again, in Matthew xx. 14, 'I will give unto this last even as unto thee,' the same critic finds it desirable to substitute 'It is my will to give.' It should be noticed that in neither of these criticisms is there any question of Greek involved. It is simply an act of fetching up the expression of our Bible to the level of modern English; and it furnishes the best evidence that a change has come over the word *will*.

236. Both *will* and *shall* are seen in their presentive power in the familiar proposal to carry a basket, or to do any other little handy service, *I will if I shall*<sup>1</sup>; that is, I am willing if you will command me; I will if so required.

There are intermediate uses of *shall* which belong neither to the presentive state when it signified 'owe,' nor to the symbolic state in which it is a mere imponderable auxiliary. In the following quotation it has a sense which lies between these two extremes.

'If the Reformers saw not how or where to draw the fine and floating and long-obsured line between religion and superstition, who shall dare to arraign them?'—Henry Hart Milman, *The Annals of St. Paul's* p. 231.

What has been said about *shall* applies equally to its

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<sup>1</sup> I have since discovered that this is not generally understood: but at least every native of Devon should be familiar with it.



preterite *should*. Its common symbolic use is illustrated in the following quotation :—

‘Labourers indeed were still striving with employers about the rate of wages—as they have striven to this very day, and will continue to strive to the world’s end, unless some master mind should discover the true principle for its settlement.’—William Longman, *Edward III*, vol. ii. ch. iii.

Let the reader fully comprehend the nature of this *should*, that he may be prepared to appreciate the contrast of the examples which follow. I found the first near my own home. I was ‘borneing’ out some allotment ‘ground, and Farmer Webb having driven a corner ‘borne’ into the ground very effectively, exclaimed, ‘There, that one’ll stand for twenty years, if he *should*!’ To a person who knows only the English of literature, the condition would seem futile—if he *should*. It would seem to mean that the ‘borne’ would stand if it happened to stand. But this was not our neighbour’s meaning. The person who should so misunderstand him, would do so for want of knowing that the word *should* has still something extant of its old presentive power. In this instance it would have to be translated into Latin, not thus—*si forte ita evenerit*; but thus—*si debuerit, si fuerit opus*: if it ought; if it be required to stand so long; or, in the brief colloquial, *if required*.

237. Connected with this thread of usage, and equally derived from the radical sense of ‘owe,’ is another power of *shall* and *should*, which is of a very subtle nature. It is one of the native traits of our mother tongue of which we have been deprived by the French influence. German scholars well know that *sohl* has a peculiar use to express something which the speaker does not assert but only reports. *Er sohl es gethan haben*, literally, ‘he shall have done it,’ signifies, ‘he is said to have done it.’ In Saxon this use was well known. Thus in the *Peterborough*

*Chronicle*, A.D. 1048 (p. 178), we read: 'for þan Eustatius hæfde gecydd þam cynge þet hit SCEOLDE beon mare gylt þære burhwara þonne his'—'forasmuch as Eustace had told the king that it was (forsooth!) more the townsfolk's fault than his.' Twice in the same *Chronicle* it is recorded that a spring of blood had issued from the earth in Berkshire, namely, under the years 1098 and 1200. In both places it is added, 'swa swa manige sædan þe hit geseon SCEOLDAN'—'as many said who professed to have seen it, or were believed to have seen it.' But now this usage is only provincial. It is very common in Devonshire, and indeed in all the west. 'I'm told such a one *should* say.'

238. How ancient it is, we may form an estimate by observing that it exists not only in German but in Danish also. In Holberg's *Erasmus Montanus*, the pedantic student is at home for vacation, and complaining that there is no one in the town who has learning enough to be a fit associate for himself. At this point he says, according to an anonymous translator, who is substantially correct: 'The clerk and the schoolmaster, it is reported, have studied; but I know not to what extent.' The original Danish is, 'Degnen og Skolemesteren SKAL have studeret, men jeg reed ikke hvorvidt det strækker sig'—literally, 'the clerk and the schoolmaster *shall* have studied.' These illustrations are so many traces of the course which this ancient verb has described in its passage from the presentive to the symbolic state. And, taken as a whole, they form so beautifully varied a series of phases, that had they been found in a classical language they would have been much admired.

The different powers of *would* are illustrated in the following quotation, where the first *would* has absolutely nothing remaining of that original idea of the action of Will, which is still present though unobtruded in the second *would*.

'It would be a charity if people would sometimes in their Litanies pray for the very healthy, very prosperous, very light-hearted, very much be-praised.'—John Keble, *Life*, p. 459.

**239.** Before we leave these auxiliaries we must notice a curious phenomenon, as Dean Alford has called it<sup>1</sup>, one which has arrested attention thousands of times, but which is not therefore worn out as an illustration, nor is it at all the less effective for being trite. I speak of the very old and familiar fact that large numbers of our English-speaking fellow-subjects cannot seize the distinction between *shall*, *should*, and *will*, *would*. Here is a distinction which is unerringly observed by the most rustic people in the purely English counties, while the most carefully educated persons who have grown up on Keltic soil cannot seize it! Mr. Fergusson has a perfect command of the English language, and yet this Kelticism occurs again and again in his writings.

\* As far as it goes, this is a distinct assertion that the place was used for burial, otherwise from the context we would gather that the Romans slain by Hengist were buried in the cemetery.'—*Rude Stone Monuments*, ch. iii.

**240. May, Might.** Like *will*, *would*, *shall*, *should*, this word in its auxiliary character is not presentive but symbolic. But we get it in its presentive function in our early poetry, as in the following from *Chevelere Assigne*, l. 134,—

'I myzte not drowne hem for dole'

the meaning of which is, I was not able to drown them for compassion. Here *myzte*, which is the same as *might*, is presentive, and means 'potui,' 'I was able.'

This word originally meant, not ability by admission or permission (as now) but by power and right, as in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Queen's English*, § 208.

substantive *might* and the adjective *mighty*. We no longer use the verb so. But it makes a characteristic feature of the fourteenth-century poetry:—

‘There was a king that mochel might  
Which Nabugodonosor hight.’

*Confessio Amantis*, Bk. i. vol. i. p. 1316, ed. Pauli.

This would be in Latin, ‘Rex quidam erat qui multum valebat, cui nomen Nabugodonosoro.’

Some traces of its presentive use linger about *may*. We use it in its old sense of ‘to be able’ in certain positions, as ‘It *may* be avoided.’ But, curious to note, we change the verb in the negative proposition, and say, ‘No, it cannot.’

‘Power cannot change them, but love *may*.’

John Keble, *Christian Year*, Sunday after Christmas.

**241. Some.** As in Mrs. Barbauld’s apostrophe to Life:—

‘Say not good night, but in some brighter clime,  
Bid me good morning.’

**More.** This is now generally known to us as a symbolic word, a mere sign of the comparative degree. But it is presentive in Acts xix. 32, ‘The *more* part knew not wherefore they were come together;’ and in that sentence of Bacon’s—‘discretion in speech is *more* than eloquence.’

**Now.** In this word we may illustrate the ærial perspective which exists in symbolism. At first it appeared as an adverb of time, signifying ‘at the present time.’ Even in this character it is a symbolic word, but it is one that lies very near the presentive frontier. It is capable of light emphasis, as in ‘Now is the accepted time!’ Then it moves off another stage, as, ‘Now faith is the confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’ Here the *now* is incapable

of accent; one hardly imagines the rhetorical emergency which would impose an emphasis on this *now*. Thus we see there is in symbolism a near and a far distance. And this second *now*, the more rarefied and symbolic of the two, is gradually undermining the position of the other. The careful writer will often have found it necessary to strike out a *now* which he had with the weightier meaning set at the head of a sentence, because of its liability to be accepted by the reader for the toneless *now*.

**242. Do.** This word is presentive in such a sentence as the following :—

‘My object is to do what I can to undo this great wrong.’—Edward A. Freeman, *History of the Norman Conquest*, vol. iii. *init.*

It is however in full activity, both as a near and also as a far-off symbolic word.

‘Diddest not thou accuse women of inconstancie? Diddest not thou accompt them easie to be won? Diddest not thou condemne them of weakenes?’—John Lyly, *Euphues*, 1579, p. 59, ed. Arber.

I have often heard an old friend quote the following, which he witnessed at an agricultural entertainment. The speaker was proposing the chairman’s health, and after much eulogy, he apostrophized the gentleman thus :—‘What I mean to say, Sir, is this: that if more people was to do as you do, there wouldn’t be so many do as they do do!’ In the final ‘do do’ it is clear we have the verb in two different powers, the first being highly symbolic, and the second almost presentive. Again, in the familiar salutation, ‘How d’ye do?’ we have the same verb in two powers. Here moreover the usual mode of writing it conveys the important lesson, that the more symbolic a word is, the more it loses tone and becomes subject to elision. It might seem as if this observation were contradicted by the previous example,

in which it is plain to the ear of every reader that of the two words in 'do do,' the former, that is to say, the more symbolic, is the more emphatic. But this is caused by the antithesis between that word and the 'was to do' preceding. In short, it is a disturbance of the intrinsic relative weight by rhetorical influence.

In this gradation of symbolism, we see what provision is made for the lighter touches of expression, the vague tints, the vanishing points. Towards a deep and distant background the full-fraught picture of copious language carries our eye, while the foreground is almost palpable in its reality.

243. As a further illustration of this distinction it may be observed that a little more or less of the symbolic element has a great effect in stamping the character of diction. By a little excess of it we get the sententious or 'would-be wise' mannerism. By a diminution of it we get an air of promptness and decision, which may produce (according to circumstances) an appearance of the business-like, or the military, or the off-hand. This is one of those observations which may best be justified by an appeal to caricatures of acknowledged merit. In the *Pickwick Papers*, the conversation of Mr. Weller the elder, a man of maxims and proverbs and store of experience, is marked by an occasional excess of the symbolic element. While 'you're a considering of it' he will proceed to suggest 'as how,' &c. On the other hand, the off-hand impudence of the adventurer Mr. Jingle, is represented by the artist mainly through this particular feature, which characterizes his conversation throughout, namely, that it has the smallest possible quantity of symbolic words.

244. To make it still more distinct what the symbolic character is, I add a paragraph in which the symbolic element is distinguished by italics.

'There is a popular saying in the Brandenburg district, where Bismarck's family has been so many centuries at home, which attributes to the Bismarcks, as the characteristic saying of the house, the phrase, "Noch lange nicht genug"—"Not near enough yet," and which expresses, we suppose, the popular conception of their tenacity of purpose,—that they were not tired out of any plan they had formed by a reiterated failure or a pertinacious opposition which would have disheartened most of their compeers. There is a somewhat extravagant illustration of this characteristic in Bismarck's wild, youthful days, if his biographer may be trusted. When studying law at Berlin he had been more than once disappointed by a bootmaker who did not send home his boots when they were promised. Accordingly when this next happened, a servant of the young jurist appeared at the bootmaker's at six in the morning with the simple question, "Are Herr Bismarck's boots ready?" When he was told they were not, he departed, but at ten minutes past six another servant appeared with the same inquiry, and so at precise intervals of ten minutes it went on all day, till by the evening the boots were finished and sent home.'

Doubt may sometimes arise concerning a particular word, when its signification lies on the confines of presentation and symbolism. In the above passage, I have let the word *home* stand once presentively, and twice I have marked it as symbolic.

We must not regard these two main divisions of words as having the rigidity of a logical classification. Even the presentive are more or less presentive; while the symbolic have an infinitely graduated scale of variation. Yet there is no uncertainty resting over the basis of the distinction here pointed out between presentive and symbolic.

In English prose the number of symbolic words is generally about sixty per cent. of the whole number employed, leaving forty per cent. for the presentives. A passage with many proper names and titles in it may, however, bring the presentives up to, or even cause them to surpass, the number of the symbolics; but the average in ordinary prose is what we have stated.

'Mr. Ward says very truly that "the men and women of Pope's satires and epistles, his Atticus and Atossa, and Sappho and Sporus, are real types, whether they be more or less faithful portraits of Addison and the old Duchess, of Lady Mary and Lord Hervey. His Dunces are the Dunces of all times: his orator Henley the mob orator, and his awful Aristarch the don, of all

epochs; *though there may have been some merit in Theobald, some use even in Henley, and though in Bentley there was undoubted greatness. But in Pope's hands individuals become types, and his creative power in this respect surpasses that of the Roman satirists, and leaves Dryden himself behind.*"<sup>1</sup>

Out of 115 words, we here find the unusually large number of fifty-three presentives, and the small proportion of sixty-two symbolics. But if we compare this with the previous paragraph, we observe that whereas the presentives are a new set of words, the symbolics are to a large extent identical in the two pieces. The symbolic words hold a large space in context, yet they are but few in the whole vocabulary of the language.

245. It would be a very interesting investigation to examine whether the chief modern languages have any considerable diversity as to the bulk and composition of their symbolic element. For here it is that we must seek the matured results of aggregate national thought, in the case of the modern languages. The symbolic is the modern element—is, we might go so far as to say, the element which alone will give a basis for a philological distinction between ancient and modern languages.

Not that any ancient languages are known which are absolutely destitute of this element. There is but one that I know, and that for the most part a rather unwritten language, in which the symbolic has not yet been started. That is the language of infancy. Whoever has observed the shifts made by prattling children to express their meaning without the help of pronouns, will need no further explanation of the statement that infantine speech is unsymbolic. But I cannot refrain from establishing this important position by the independent testimony of such a philosopher as the late Professor Ferrier.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on Greek Philosophy and other Philosophical Remains of James Frederick Ferrier.* Edited by Sir Alexander Grant, p. 252.



'In discussing the question, When does consciousness come into manifestation? we found that man is not *born* conscious; and that therefore consciousness is not a given or *ready-made* fact of humanity. In looking for some sign of its manifestation, we found that it has come into operation whenever the human being has pronounced the word "I," knowing what this expression means. This word is a highly curious one, and quite an anomaly, inasmuch as its true meaning is utterly incommunicable by one being to another, endow the latter with as high a degree of intelligence as you please. Its origin cannot be explained by imitation or association. Its meaning cannot be *taught* by any conceivable process; but must be originated absolutely by the being using it. This is not the case with any other form of speech. For instance, if it be asked What is a table? a person may point to one and say, "that is a table." But if it be asked, What does "I" mean? and if the same person were to point to himself and say "this is I," this would convey quite a wrong meaning, unless the inquirer, before putting the question, had originated within himself the notion "I," for it would lead him to call the other person "I."

246. It is quite certain that 'I' has its own special peculiarity, which may be said to distinguish it from every other form of speech. As a token of the dawn of consciousness in a child, the use of this word may claim a special attention. But in the main it is to be observed that the quality in this word which excited the professor's admiration, is a quality not peculiar to the pronoun 'I,' but of many other pronouns, if not of all pronouns as such. As a general rule, it is probably with the pronoun 'I' that the child first seizes the use of the symbolic element in speech. It is not, however, always so. In an instance which has been lately before me, a well-observed instance, supported moreover by conclusions from other less accurately noted cases, the pronoun 'I' has been maturely acquired and in full use while the pronoun 'you' was yet in the tentative stage.

The difference so well demonstrated by Professor Ferrier, as separating the nature of the word 'I' from that of the word 'table,' is the difference which splits the whole vocabulary into the two divisions of the presentive and the symbolic. A child does not understand any of the symbolic words at all. Where it uses them, it is by unconscious

imitation. This happens particularly in the case of the prepositions, which are to the opening intelligence not separate words at all, but mechanical appendages to the presentives which they understand.

Observation will, moreover, shew us that when children have fully mastered all the symbolics of the first distance, they will stumble at those which are more remote. Only yesterday I stepped into a cab with a boy of seven years old, who is of an inquiring turn of mind. The number 20 was on the vehicle, and he asked me whether that signified that the price of it was £20? I said a few words in explanation, and as I knew that he had been exercised in thought about money values, I added, 'You could not build a cab for £20.' He replied: 'No, *I* could not; could you?' The surprising turn thus given to the conversation will enable the reader to estimate the interval which separates *you* the personal from *you* the impersonal pronoun, and thus open up to view a further symbolic distance.

247. We sometimes talk of the speech of animals. It is hardly possible to deny them all share in this faculty. They certainly communicate their emotions by the voice. And this voice is not without discrimination. The cry of the barn-door fowl at the sight of a fox or of a hawk is such as would tell an experienced person what was going on. The various accents of the Newfoundland dog, where he has a real understanding with his master, or of the collie among the sheep on the northern fells, are manifestations wonderfully like inceptive speech; and that everybody feels this to be so is evidenced from the common meed of praise bestowed on a sagacious dog, that he all but talks.

Whether the cries of animals are humble specimens of speech, or whether they are altogether different in kind, is however a question which we have not to solve. The sub-

ject has only been introduced in order that it might afford us another point of view from which to contemplate the important distinction between presentive and symbolic speech. If we estimate at its very highest the claims that can be made for the language of the beasts, it will always be limited by the line which severs these two kinds of expression. We can imagine an orator on behalf of the animals maintaining that their cries might represent to other animals not only emotions but also objects of the outer sense or even objects reflected in the memory. We should not think a man quite unreasonable if he imagined that a certain whinny of a horse indicated to another horse as much as the word 'stable.' But we should think him talking at random, if he pretended to be able to imagine that a horse's language possessed either a pronoun or a preposition.

248. Here then we consider ourselves to touch upon that in human speech which bears the highest and most distinctive impress of the action of the human mind. Here we find the beauty, the blossom, the glory, the *auréole* of language. Here we seem to have found a means of measuring the relative progress manifested in different philological eras.

Among ancient languages, that one is most richly furnished with this element which in every other respect also bears off the palm of excellence. Dr. Arnold was not likely to have written the following passage unless he had been sensible of a high intellectual delight.

'There is an actual pleasure in contemplating so perfect a management of so perfect an instrument as is exhibited in Plato's language, even if the matter were as worthless as the words of Italian music; whereas the sense is only less admirable in many places than the language.' *Life*, i. 387.

The admiration which is accorded on all hands to the Greek language is due to the exquisite perfection of its symbolic element. It is not that *λόγος* or *ῥῆμα* or *φωνή* have

any intrinsic superiority over *ratio* or *verbum* or *vox*; that *ἄνθρωπος* or *ἄνθρωπος* is preferable to *vir* or *homo*: nor is it even that the music, sweet as it may have been, reaches so effectually to the ear of the modern scholar as to carry him captive and cause him to forget the more audible march of Ausonian rhythms. No; it all lies in the coyness of those little words whose meaning is as strikingly telling as it is impalpably subtle. It is those airy nothings which scholars having been chasing all these centuries ever since the revival of letters, every now and then fancying they had seized them, till they were roused from their sweet delusion by the laughter of their fellow-idlers. The exact distinction between *μή* and *οὐ*, the precise meaning of *ἄν* and *ἄρα* and *δή* must forsooth be defined and settled; and it is very possible that we have not yet seen the last of these futile lucubrations. These things will be settled when the truant schoolboy has bound the rainbow to a tree.

249. There are still scholars who seek to render a firm reason for the Greek article in every place in which it occurs. But can they do so for their own language? Can they say, for example, what is the value of the definite article which occurs three times in the following distich?

‘And to watch as the little bird watches  
When the falcon is in the air.’

Where is the man who can handle language so skilfully as to describe and define the value of these articles? He may say they are equivalent to *so* and *so* in Greek or in French, but he cannot render an account of what that value is. And yet this word was once a demonstrative pronoun, and it is time and use that has filed it down to this airy tenuity and delicate fineness. The sense would be affected by the absence of these little words, and

yet it cannot be said that they are necessary to the sense. They seem to be at once nothing and something. The gold is beaten out to an infinitesimal thinness. Indeed, it is with language as with glory in Shakspeare's description:

'Glory is like a circle in the water,  
Which never ceaseth to enlarge it selfe,  
Till by broad spreading it disperse to naught.'

1 *Henry VI*, i. 2. 133.

250. It is painful to think how much good enthusiasm has been wasted upon learning definitions which were not only unreal, but absolutely misleading as to the nature of the thing studied. So far from its being possible to define by rule the value of the Greek particles, it is barely possible to characterize them by a vague general principle. They were the product of usage, and usage is a compound made up of many converging tendencies, and that which was multitudinous in its sources continues to be heterogeneous in its composition. As usage produced it, so use alone can teach it. This is why the skilled examiner will proceed to test a knowledge of Greek by selecting a passage not with many hard words in it, but with this symbolic element delicately exhibited. Hard and rare words are useful as a test whether the books have been got up, but an examination in these furnishes no check on cramming. Whereas, it is a part of the distinct character and peculiar iridescent beauty of the symbolic element that it cannot be acquired by sudden methods: it can only be learnt by a process of gradual habituation, which is study in the true sense of the word, and wholesome exercise for the mind. You cannot tack on mechanically a given English word to a given Greek word in the symbolic element, as you do in the presentive. Symbolic words require different terms of rendering in different connections. They have a relative diversifiability of

states and powers and functions, like living things. This is in each language the pith, the marrow, the true mother tongue. This is the element which is nearest of kin to thought; and the efficiency of a writer or speaker depends largely on his power over it: because, the moment he passes beyond hard facts and palpable conceptions, there is nothing but the symbolic element that can serve him just to hit off the vague idea in his mind.

251. The following passage shews it well in Greek, and it is a passage borrowed from an Examination Paper. The symbolics are printed in thick type.

Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ἔσπε μὲν αἱ σπονδαὶ ἦσαν οὐποτε ἐπανόμην ἡμᾶς μὲν οἰκτεῖραν, βασιλείᾳ δὲ καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ μακαρίζαν, διαθεώμενος αὐτῶν ὅσην μὲν χάραν καὶ οἶαν ἔχοιεν, ὥς δὲ ἀφθονα τὰ ἐπιτήδεια, ὅσους δὲ θεράποντας, ὅσα δὲ κτήνη, χρυσὸν δὲ, ἐσθῆτα δὲ. Τὰ δ' αὖ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ὁπότε ἐνθυμοίμην ὅτι τῶν μὲν ἀγαθῶν πάντων οὐδενὸς ἡμῖν μετεῖη, εἰ μὴ πριαίμεθα, ὅτου δ' ὠνησόμεθα, ἥδειν ὅτι ὀλίγους ἔχοντας, ἄλλως δὲ πως πορίζεσθαι τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἢ ὠνουμένους ἕρκους ἤδη κατέχοντας ἡμᾶς ταῦτ' οὖν λογιζόμενος ἐνίοτε τὰς σπονδὰς μᾶλλον ἐφοβούμην ἢ νῦν τὸν πόλεμον. Ἐπεὶ μέντοι ἐκείνοι ἔλυσαν τὰς σπονδὰς λελύσθαι μοι δοκεῖ καὶ ἡ ἐκείνων ὕβρις καὶ ἡ ἡμετέρα ὑποψία.—Xenophon, *Anabasis*, iii.

The symbolics in Latin are strikingly different from those in Greek. They differ as the flowers of the florist differ from those of nature. It is manifest to the eye that the symbolics in Greek have grown spontaneously, while their Latin analogues have a got-up and cultivated look. The modifying words especially, those which are sometimes roughly comprised under the term particles, look very much like scholastic products. A long period of Greek education preceded the Augustan age of the Latin language, and the symbolic part could not help getting an educated development, when the youth of successive generations had been daily translating their bits of Greek into the vernacular Latin.

252. Although the symbolics in Latin are very effective

when understood, yet it must be allowed that they are very hard to understand. This is one reason why a real Latin scholar, one who can command this title among scholars, is such a very rare personage. The symbolical element, which is to the mode of thought the essential element in every phrase in which it is present, did not grow of itself unconsciously and in the open air as in Greece, but it was the product of artificial elaboration and studied adaptation. And it still sits on the Latin like a ceremonious garment. The old native Latin, whose vitality and functionality was all but purely flectional, springs out of its Greek disguise every now and then, and shows what it can do with its own natural armour. Look at the muscular collectedness of such a sentence as *BEATI MUNDO CORDE*, and compare it in respect of the total absence of symbolics, either with the Greek *Μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ*, or with the English *Blessed are the pure in heart*.

There spoke out the native and pre-classic Latin, a truly ancient language, and one in comparison with which we must call the Greek truly modern. For that rich and free outflow of the symbolic which marks the Greek, is the badge and characteristic of modernism in language. On the other hand, that independence of symbolics, and that power of action by complete inflectional machinery, which marks the Latin, is the true characteristic and best perfection of the ancient or pre-symbolic era. Not that our monuments reach back absolutely to a period when the symbolic element had yet to begin. Already in the Sanskrit, the symbolic verb *is*, than which nothing can be more purely symbolic, is in as full maturity as it is in our modern languages. The latter have made more use of it, but the oldest languages of the Aryan race were already in possession of it. We learn from Professor Max Müller that the Sanskrit root

is AS, 'which, in all the Aryan languages, has supplied the material for the auxiliary verb. Now, even in Sanskrit, it is true, this root AS is completely divested of its material character; it means *to be*, and nothing else. But there is in Sanskrit a derivative of the root AS, namely *asu*, and in this *asu*, which means the vital breath, the original meaning of the root AS has been preserved. AS, in order to give rise to such a noun as *asu*, must have meant *to breathe*, then *to live*, then *to exist*, and it must have passed through all these stages before it could have been used as the abstract auxiliary verb which we find not only in Sanskrit but in all Aryan languages.'<sup>1</sup>

253. Although we cannot pursue our research so far up into antiquity as to arrive at a station where inflections exist without symbolic words, yet we have sufficient ground for treating flexion as an ancient, and symbolism as a modern phenomenon. One reason is, that in the foremost languages of the world, flexion is waning while symbolism is waxing. Another consideration is this, that after the growth of the symbolic element, the motive for flexion would no longer exist.

We have every reason to anticipate in the future of the world's history, that symbolic will continue to develop, and that flexion will cease to grow. A widening divergence separates them at their hither end. But if we could take a look into that far distant antiquity in which they had their rise, we might perhaps find their fountains near each other if not absolutely identified in one well-head. I imagine that inflections are simply words which, having made some progress towards symbolism, and having lost accordingly in specific gravity, have been attracted by, and at length

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<sup>1</sup> *Lectures*, ii. p. 349.



absorbed into, the denser substance of presentive words. This would account for the great start which flexion had over symbolic; and yet we should understand how a marked and prominent symbolic word like *is*, charged with a singular amount of vitality, should have found the opportunity to make and keep a place for itself even as early as our highest attainable antiquity.

### *Symphytism.*

254. The distinction between presentive and symbolic words is, I hope, tolerably clear to the reader. And also this—that presentive words have a tendency to become symbolic. And also this—that the process which changes them from presentive to symbolic is accompanied (unless other forces interfere) by a relative lightening of the vocal energy in a properly modulated discourse. Moreover, the symbolic words are marked by a clinging adherent tendency to attach themselves to other words; and as this tendency will often force itself on our attention, we will, for brevity sake, call it *symphytism*. When the process of symphytism is matured, we have either (1) Particle-composition or (2) Flexion.

(1) We have Particle-composition when the old negative *ne* coalesces with its verb; thus—*nelt* for *ne wilt*; *navestu* for *ne havest þu*, thou hast not; *nam* for *ne am*, am not; *Ich nam of-drad*, I am not alarmed. In the fourteenth century *nat* is usual for *ne wat*, knows not; and we find the ordinary remark ‘you cannot tell’ or ‘one does not know,’ expressed in this condensed manner, *me not*; where *me* is the indefinite pronoun, being a relic of *man*, and *not* is for *ne wot*.

Or, when the particle *a* coalesces with a noun; as—

‘Awinter warm, asumere cold.’ *Owl and Nigbtingale*.

Or with an adjective, as, *abroad, along, around*.

-(2) We have Flexion when a change of this kind gives any word a grammatical flexibility, a faculty of changing its relative office, a parsing value. Our language furnishes instances in which this was partly accomplished, and afterwards undone: and with a few examples of this, which may be called 'arrested flexion,' we will close the chapter.

In the early period of our literature we see symbolics growing on to their presentives and forming one word with them. In the case of the pronouns with the verbs this was very conspicuous in early English, as it was also in early German. The first personal pronoun *I*, which was anciently  *Ic*, is found coalescing both before and after its verb. In the latter case the *c* is generally developed into *ch*. In the *Canterbury Tales*, 14362—

'Let be, quod he; it schal not be, so theeche!'

Here *theech* is the coalition of *thee ic*, equivalent to the more frequent phrase, *so mote I thee*; that is to say, 'So may I prosper' (A.S. *þeon*, to flourish, prosper).

In the *Owl and Nightingale* (A.D. 1250) we find *wenestu* for *wenest þu*, weenest thou; *wultu*, wilt thou; *shaltu*, shalt thou; *etestu*, eatest thou. In Bamford's *Dialect of South Lancashire*, there is *cúdto*, couldst thou? *cudtono*, couldst thou not?

255. And not only does the pronoun adhere to its verb when it stands as subject to the verb. In the following west-country sentence the object-pronoun adheres: 'Telln, what a payth out, I'll payn agan'—'Tell him, what he pays out, I will pay him again.' Here the *π* represents the old accusative pronoun *hine*, which has been absorbed into the verb.

Two symbolics would run together like two drops of water on a pane of glass. The verb *shall* is often found making one word with *be* down as late as the seventeenth century. Thus, Isaiah xl. 4:—

'Euery valley shalbe exalted, and euery mountaine and hill shalbe made low.'

In *King Lear*, iv. 6, where Edgar assumes the character of a rustic, he says *chill* for *I will*, and *chud* for *I would*. Here we have to understand that the first pronoun was pronounced as *Ich*, so that *chill* is just as natural a coalition of *ich will* as *nill* is of *ne will*. In the following lines *cham* is for 'ich am,' I am.

'Chill tell thee what, good vellowe,  
Before the vriers went hence, .  
A bushell of the best wheate  
Was zold vor vourteen pence.

Cham zure they were not voolishe  
That made the masse, che trowe:  
Why, man, 'tis all in Latine,  
Aud vools no Latine knowe.'

Percy's *Reliques*, ii. pp. 324, 325.

These agglutinate forms, including such as *ichave*, *hastow*, *willu*, *dostu*, *slepestow*, *sechestu*, *wenestu*, are found in great numbers. In *St. Juliana*, a prose biography of the thirteenth century, we get the curious form *nabich* for 'ne habbe ich,' I have not.

These examples are enough to prove that there is a disposition in the symbolics to coalesce with their presentives, or with one another. So decided is the tendency, that had there not been some great counteracting force, it must have completely altered the appearance and character of the language. This counteracting force is nothing more than the natural influence of literary habits when they are widely diffused. From this cause has arisen a modern reaction in favour of the preservation of all words that are known to have once had a separate individuality. This reaction has put a stop to these coalitions, and in some cases dissolved them where they had seemed to be established. In the early prints of Shakspeare

the conversational abbreviation for *I will* is written *Ile*, but modern usage requires that the separate existence of each word should be kept up, and accordingly we write it *I'll*. The same movement, overshooting its aim, has, at least in one instance, 'restored' a word to a present position which it never held in the past. The substitution of *his* for the possessive 's, as in 'John his book,' and other well-known instances, was done by way of re-establishing the original explicitness of the language. It furnishes us with a strong illustration of the existence of that counter-force which restrains the tendency to a symphytic coalition.

257. In fact the growth of symbolic words and the growth of inflections are naturally antagonistic to, and almost mutually exclusive of, each other. They are both made of the same material. They are the results of opposite states of the aggregate mind. If the attention of the community is fully awake to its language and takes an interest in it, no word can lose its independence. If language is used unreflectingly, the lighter words will get absorbed by those of greater weight, and then they pass into the dependent condition of inflections attached to the main words. Thus even Greek, our brightest ancient example of symbolism, produced conglomerations in its obscure and neglected period, as *Stamboul*, the modern name of Constantinople, which is a conglomerate of *ἐς τὴν πόλιν*. So also *Stanchio* or *Stanko*, a conglomerate of *ἐς τὴν Κῶ*, is the modern name for the island anciently known as Cos or Coos. For the passage of a word into the symphytic condition, a certain neglect and obscurity is necessary; while the requisite condition for the formation of a rich assortment of symbolics is a general and sustained habit of attention to the national language.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE VERBAL GROUP.

258. THE verb is distinguished from all other forms of speech by very marked characteristics and a very peculiar organization. It has surrounded itself with an assortment of subordinate means of expression, such as are found in attendance on no other part of speech. The power of combining with itself the ideas of person, time, and all the various contingencies which we comprise under the term 'mood,' is a power possessed by the verb alone. It makes no difference whether these accessory ideas are added to the verb by means of inflections or of symbolic words. The important fact is this,—that under the one form or the other, the verb has such means of expression at its service in every highly organized language.

The cause wherefore the verb is thus richly attended with its satellites becomes very plain when we consider what a verb is. A verb is a word whereby the chief action of the mind finds expression. The chief action of the mind is judgment; that is to say, the assertion or the denial of a proposition. This is explicitly done by means of the verb. Out of this function of the verb, and the exigencies of that function, have arisen the peculiar honours and prerogatives of the verb. This part of speech has, by a natural

operation, drawn around it those aids which were necessary to it for the discharge of its function as the exponent of the mental act of judgment.

259. It will be well to distinguish the essence of the verb from that which is but a result of its essential character. The power of expressing Time by those variations which we call Tense (after an old form of the French word for time), has attracted notice as the most salient feature about the verb. Aristotle defined a verb as a word that included the expression of time. The established German word for a verb is *Zeitwort*, that is to say, Time-word. Others have thought that the power of expressing Action is the real and true characteristic of the verb. Ewald, in his Hebrew Grammar, calls the verb accordingly *Thatwort*, that is to say, Deed-word. But in these expressions the essential is obscured by that which is more conspicuous. Madvig, in his Latin Grammar, seems to put it in the right light. He designates the verb as *UDSAGNSORD*, that is Outsayings-word; because it 'udsiger om en Person eller Ting en Tilstand eller en Virksomhed,' outsays, pronounces, asserts, delivers, about a person or thing a condition or an action. *It is the instrument by which the mind expresses its judgments, or (in modern parlance) makes its deliverances.*

260. To know a verb from a noun is perhaps the most elementary step in the elements of grammar. Assuming that the reader has thoroughly mastered this distinction, which is very real and necessary to be known, we proceed to a statement which may at first sight appear to contradict it. The verb and the noun spring from one root. It often happens that distinctions which are very real and useful for a certain purpose and in a certain view, are found to disappear or to lose their importance on a wider or deeper investigation. Grammatical distinctions will often vanish in

philology. Philologically speaking, the presentive verb is only a noun raised to a verbal power. As a ready illustration of this, we may easily form an alphabetical list of words which are nouns if they have *a* or *an*, and verbs if they have *to* prefixed:—*ape, bat, cap, dart, eye, fight, garden, house, ink, knight, land, mark, number, order, pair, question, range, sail, time, usher, vaunt, wing, yell.*

As soon as you put to any one of these the sign of a noun or of a verb, a great difference ensues—a difference hardly less than that between the gunpowder to which you have put the match and that over which you have snapped the pouch's mouth. Little by little, external marks of distinction gather around that word which the mind has promoted to the foremost rank. Pronunciation first, and orthography at a slower distance, seek gradually to give a form to that which a flash of thought has instantaneously created. Pronunciation takes advantage of its few opportunities, while orthography contends with its many obstacles. We have a distinction in pronunciation between *a house* and *to house*, between *a present* and *to present*, *a record* and *to record*, between *a use* and *to use*. But these distinctions of sound are as yet unwritten. It is only known to us through poetic rhythm that the substantive of *to manure* was once called *mānure*:—

‘The smoking manure and o’erspreads it all.’

William Cowper, *The Garden*.

In other cases orthography has added its mark of distinction also. We distinguish both by sound and writing *an advice* from *to advise*, *a gap* from *to gape*, and *a prophecy* from *to prophesy*. So also *life* and *live*, *strife* and *strive*, *breath* and *breathe*.

This is perhaps as much as need here be said to account for the wide separation now existing between nouns and

verbs, though they were originally one. The difference of condition that now severs them as by a gulf is the accumulated result of the age-long continuation of that process whose beginnings are here indicated.

We have spoken of the verb as a transformed noun, because this is the most frequent occurrence. But any word, whether pronoun, or interjection, or whatever it may be, can be raised to this power. The mere act of predication, which is the most central and dominant of all the acts in which language is exercised, is sufficient to transform any word whatever and constitute it a verb.

261. By reason of its central position, and by its constant and unsuspended action, the verb has a greater tenacity of form than any other part of speech. Hence it is that the most remarkable antiquities of the English language are to be found in the verb. It is in the verb that we find the Saxon forms best preserved, and that we find the most conspicuous proofs of the relationship of our language to the German and Dutch and Danish and Icelandic. In fact, it would be hardly too much to say, that a description of the elder verbs of any of the Gothic languages would, with slight alterations, pass for a description of the elder verbs of any one of the others.

The verbs which we shall notice first, and which are known as the Strong verbs, have preserved tense-forms which are among the boldest features of the English language, which are among its most striking features of similitude with other Gothic tongues, and which at the same time are among the most peculiar characteristics of the Gothic family in its comparison with other families of speech. This coincidence of internal harmony with external contrast, knits together the Gothic family in a compact and separate unity, and seems to indicate that it must have remained undivided and



undispersed for a long period after its separation from the other members of the Indo-European stock.

**262.** When we proceed to consider the person-forms, this fidelity no longer holds. The English has gone further than any of its cognates in dropping the personal inflections. The German says *Ich glaube, du glaubest, er glaubt; wir glauben, ihr glaubet, sie glauben*. The Englishman says, *I believe, thou believest, he believes; we believe, you believe, they believe*. And as *thou believest* is but rarely used, much more rarely than *du glaubest*, and perhaps more rarely even than *ihr glaubet*, we have only the -s of the third singular *he believes* as the one personal inflection left in ordinary use among us.

Particularly is it to be observed that we have lost the *n* of the plural present, which is preserved in the German form *glauben*. We know from the Latin *sunt, amant, monent, regunt, audiunt*, and from other sources, that *nt* was anciently a very wide-spread termination for the plural verb. This is boldly displayed in the Mæso-Gothic verb, as may be seen in the following example of the present indicative of the verb for 'to believe,' GALAUBJAN:—

|                 | 1st.      | 2nd.       | 3rd.       |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| <i>Singular</i> | galaubja  | galaubeis  | galaubaith |
| <i>Plural</i>   | galaubjam | galaubeith | galaubjand |

**263.** Here we have *nd* in the third person plural. In the Old High German it was as in Latin *nt*. The Germans have dropped the dental *t* and have kept the liquid *n*. We dropped the *n*, or rather we merged it in a thicker vowel before, and a thicker consonant after. The plural termination -*ãð* of the Saxon present indicative is the analogue of the Gothic termination -*and*. In the same manner an *n* has been absorbed in the English words *tooth, goose, mouth, five, soft,*

which are in German *gahen, Gahen, Mund, sinf, sanft*: also in *sooth*, which is in Danish *sand*. The following is the present indicative of the Saxon verb *GELYFAN*, to believe:—

|                 | 1st.           | 2nd.            | 3rd.           |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Singular</i> | <i>gelyfe</i>  | <i>gelyfest</i> | <i>gelyfð</i>  |
| <i>Plural</i>   | <i>gelyfað</i> | <i>gelyfað</i>  | <i>gelyfað</i> |

The written language never had an *n* in the third person plural of the present indicative, not even in the oldest stage of Saxon literature. For the past tense we retained it, and also for the subjunctive mood in all tenses. The consequence is, that in our early literature verbs abound with *n* in the third person plural, but never in the present tense. Thus Mark xvi. 13, *and hig him ne gelyfdon*, 'neither believed they them.' In Exodus iv. 5 we have the plural of the present subjunctive, *þæt hig gelyfon*, 'that they may believe.' In the former of these passages Wyclif has, *And thei goynge toolden to othere, nethir thei bileuyden to hem*.

**264.** It is one of the marks of Chaucer's severance from the old mother tongue that he uses the *n*-form of the plural even for the present indicative. It had been preserved in the midland district, and was now for the first time seen in cultivated English. It is characteristic of the beginnings of an era, that forms hitherto neglected have a new chance of recognition.

'And smale foweles maken melodye;  
That slepen al the nyght with open Iye,  
So priketh hem nature in hir corages—  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.'

The same thing may be seen in the quotation from Gower, above, **199**. This was retained as one of the recognised archaisms available only for poetic diction, and it long continued in the heroic or mock-heroic style, as we see in the following, from the eighteenth century.

'In every village mark'd with little spire,  
 Embower'd in trees, and hardly known to fame,  
 There dwells, in lowly shed and mean attire,  
 A matron old, whom we Schoolmistress name,  
 Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;  
 They griev'd sore, in piteous durance pent,  
 Aw'd by the power of this relentless dame,  
 And oft times, on vagaries idly bent,  
 For unkempt hair, or task uncoun'd, are sorely shent.'

William Shenstone (1714-1763), *The Schoolmistress*.

265. In the ordinary paths of the language, however, the personal inflections were reduced nearly to their present simplicity before the Elizabethan era.

The tenacity of which we spoke displays itself most conspicuously in the tense-forms; that is to say, the forms used for expressing varieties of time.

The boldest feature which is found among the verbs of our family, is the formation of the preterite by an internal vowel-change, without any external addition. This character supplies a basis for the division of the verbs into three classes,—the Strong, the Mixed, and the Weak.

## I. STRONG VERBS.

266. The Strong are of the highest antiquity, are limited in number, are gradually but very slowly passing away, as one by one at long intervals they drop out of use and are not recruited by fresh members. They are characterised by the internal formation of the preterite, and by the formation of the participle in *n*. This latter feature has however been less constant than the preterite. The following list comprises most of them. Only those forms which are given in the ordinary type are in full use. Those in **black letter** flourished in mediæval times; those in **thick type** are chiefly of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries; and those in

*italics* are curt and negligent forms, many of which belong to the eighteenth century. The few which are in SMALL CAPITALS are Saxon forms. Those in spaced type are from a collateral language or dialect.

**267.** Only the simple verbs are given, and not their compounds. The list contains *come, hold, get*; but not *become, behold, beget*; *bid* but not *forbid*; *give* but not *forgive*, &c. On the other hand, those compounds whose simples no longer exist in the language, are here given, as *abide, begin, forsake*.

| PRESENT. | PRETERITE.      | PARTICIPLE.      |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|
| abide    | abode           | [a]bidden *      |
| bake     | beuk *          | baken            |
| bear     | bore, bare      | borne and born   |
| beat     | beat            | beaten, beat     |
| begin    | began           | begun            |
| BELGAN   | BEALH           | BOLGEN, bowln *  |
| BEON     | . . .           | been             |
| bid      | bade, bid       | bidden, bid      |
| bind     | bound           | bounden, bound   |
| bite     | bote *, bit     | bitten, bit      |
| blow     | blew            | blown            |
| bow      | BEAH            | bowne *          |
| break    | broke, brake    | broken           |
| burst    | brast           | bursten, burst   |
| carve    | carf *          | CORFEN           |
| cast     | coost *         | casten *         |
| chide    | chid, chode *   | chidden, chid    |
| choose   | chose           | chosen           |
| cleave   | clove, clavo    | cloven           |
| climb    | clomb           | . . .            |
| cling    | clung           | clung            |
| come     | came            | comen *, come    |
| creep    | crope *, crap * | cropen * cruppen |
| crow     | orew            | . . .            |
| delve    | dalfe           | dolven           |
| dig      | dug             | dug              |

## PRESENT.

draw  
 drink  
 drive  
 eat  
 fall  
 fight  
 find  
 fling  
 fly  
 forsake  
 freeze  
 get  
 give  
 glide  
 gnaw  
 go  
 GRAFE  
 grind  
 grow  
 heave  
 help  
 hew  
 hing \*  
 hold  
 lade  
 l~~ast~~  
 lie  
 melt  
 plat  
 ride  
 ring  
 rise  
 run  
 see  
 seethe  
 shake  
 shape  
 shave

## PRETERITE.

drew  
 drank, drunk  
 drove  
 ate  
 fell  
 fought  
 found  
 flung  
 flew  
 forsook  
 froze  
 •gat, got  
 gave  
 gl~~id~~ \*, glode  
 gnew \*  
 . . .  
 GROF  
 ground  
 grew  
 hove  
 holp  
 HEOW  
 hang, hung  
 held  
 . . .  
 . . .  
 lay  
 . . .  
 plet \*  
 rode, rid \*  
 rang, rung  
 rose  
 ran  
 saw, see \*  
 sod  
 shook  
 shope  
 . . .

## PARTICIPLE.

drawn  
 drunken \*, drunk  
 driven  
 eaten  
 fallen, fell \*  
 fought, foughten \*  
 found  
 flung  
 flown  
 forsaken  
 frozen  
 gotten, got  
 given  
 . . .  
 gnawn \*  
 gone  
 graven \*  
 ground  
 grown  
 . . .  
 holpen, bolp \*  
 hewn  
 hung  
 holden \*  
 laden, loden \*  
 lorn  
 lain, lien \*  
 molten  
 . . .  
 ridden, rid  
 rung  
 risen, rose \*  
 run  
 seen  
 sodden  
 shaken, shook \*  
 shapen  
 shaven

## PRESENT.

shear  
 shew  
 shine  
 shoot  
 shove  
 shrink  
 sing  
 singe  
 sink  
 sit  
 slay  
 slide  
 sling  
 slink  
 slit  
 smite  
 speak  
 spin  
 spring  
 steal  
 stick  
 sting  
 stink  
 STRICAN  
 stride  
 strike  
 string  
 strive  
 swear  
 swell  
 swim  
 swing  
 take  
 tear  
 thrive  
 throw  
 tread  
 wake

## PRETERITE.

shore  
 . . .  
 shone  
 shot  
 shof \*  
 shrank, shrunk  
 sang, sung  
 . . .  
 sank  
 gate, sat  
 slew  
 slob, slid  
 slang \*, slung  
 slunk  
 slit, slit  
 smote  
 spake, spoke  
 span  
 sprang  
 stole  
 stuck  
 stung  
 stank and stunk  
 STRAC \*  
 strode  
 struck  
 strung  
 strove  
 swore, sware  
 swal  
 swam  
 swung  
 took  
 tore, tare  
 throve  
 threw  
 trod  
 woke

## PARTICIPLE.

shorn  
 shewn  
 shone  
 shotten \*  
 . . .  
 shrunken, sbrunk  
 sung  
 sung \*  
 sunken, sunk  
 sitten  
 slain  
 slidden, slid  
 slung  
 slunk  
 slit  
 smitten  
 spoken, spoke \*  
 spun  
 sprung  
 stolen  
 stuck  
 stung  
 stunk  
 stricken or striken \*  
 stridden  
 stricken  
 strung  
 striven  
 sworn  
 swollen  
 swum  
 swung  
 taken, took \*  
 torn  
 thriven  
 thrown  
 trodden, trod  
 . . .

| PRESENT.        | PRETERITE.          | PARTICIPLE.            |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| wash            | wush (Scots)        | washen                 |
| wax             | wet                 | waxen *                |
| wear            | wore                | worn                   |
| weave           | wove                | woven                  |
| WESAN           | was                 | [Germ. gewesen]        |
| WEORÐAN, worthe | WEARþ               | GEWORDEN, worth *      |
| win             | won                 | won                    |
| wind            | wound               | wound                  |
| wreak           | WREC                | ywroken *              |
| wring           | wrung               | wrung                  |
| write           | wrote, WRAT *, writ | written, writ, wrote * |

**268.** *Remarks on the Forms signed with an Asterisk.*

[a]biddēn. We find the simple form in *Eger and Grime*, line 555:—

‘He might full well haue bidden att home.’

beuk. *Gentle Shepherd*, act ii. sc. i.

bowln. A relic of a forcible word in Saxon poetry, GEBOLGEN, swollen, generally with anger. It is found in Surrey’s *Translation of the Second Book of the Aeneid*, and there it simply means physically swollen:—

‘Distained with bloody dust, whose feet were bowln  
With the strait cords wherewith they haled him.’

bote. *Eger and Grime*, 992.

bowne. ‘And now he is bowne to turn home againe.’

*Eger and Grime*, 948.

Here also must be put the expression ‘Homeward bound’—though there is a great claim for the Icelandic *buinn*.

carf. ‘And carf biforn his fader at the table.’

Chaucer, *Prologue*, 100.

chode. Genesis xxxi. 36; Numbers xx. 3.

COOST. ‘Maggie coost her head fu’ high,  
Looked asklent and unco skeigh,  
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh.’

Robert Burns, *Duncan Gray*.

**casten.** As in the quotation from Surrey, above, 155.

**comen.** Spenser, *Faery Queene*, iv. 1. 15, *overcommen*.

‘And if thou be comen to fight with that knight.’

*Eger and Grime*, 887.

**crope, cropen.** Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, 4257, 11918.

**crap.** *Gentle Shepherd*, act v. sc. i.

**drunken.** Luke xvii. 8.

**fell**, participle.

‘Which thou hast perpendicularly fell.’ *King Lear*, iv. 6. 54.

**foughten.**

‘On the foughten field

Michael and his Angels prevalent

‘Encamping.’

*Paradise Lost*, vi. 410.

**270. glod.** *Poem of Genesis and Exodus*, 76. Shelley has ‘glode.’

**gnew.** In Tyndale we find *gnew* as the preterite of *gnaw*.

‘Whereupon for very pain and tediousness he lay down to sleep, for to put the commandment, which so gnaw and fretted his conscience, out of mind; as the nature of all wicked is, when they have sinned a good, to seek all means with riot, revel, and pastime, to drive the remembrance of sin out of their thoughts; or, as Adam did, to cover their nakedness with aprons of pope-holy works. *Prologue to the Prophet Jonas* (Parker Society, p. 456).

**gnawn.** Shakspeare: ‘begnawn with the bots,’ *Taming of the Shrew*, iii. 2. The Saxon form was GNAGEN.

**graven.** Psalm vii. 16, elder version, ‘He hath graven and digged up a pit.’ And often ‘graven image’ in the Bible of 1611.

**holp**, participle. Shakspeare, *Richard II*, v. 5. 62.

**hing.** This form occurs in one of the narratives of Dean Ramsay, who puts it into the mouth of a Scotch judge of the last generation. It is quite common in Scotland to this day.

This verb made an early transit to the weak form, and was conjugated thus—*hang*, *hanged*, *hanged*. Properly speaking, this was a new and quite different verb, and should have had the transitival use, while the strong



*hing, hang, hung*, kept the neuter function. There are extant traces of the observance of this principle. Thus, nobody says that his hat *hanged* on a peg. But as nothing can restrain the caprice of speech, this early broke rule, and the young weak form *hanged*, stood for the neuter sense. Example:—

‘But could not finde what they might do to him: for all the people hanged vpon him when they heard him.’—Luke xix. 48. Geneva, 1557.

**271. holden.** Psalm lxiii. 9, elder version: and eleven times in the authorized version of the Bible.

**loden.** Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie*, 1581; ed. Edward Arber, p. 19.

**lien.** ‘Though ye have lien among the pots, &c.,’ Ps. lxviii. 13, elder version. Shakspeare, *King John*, iv. 1. 50, where the first three folios spell it *lyen*.

**plet.**

‘I took delyte  
To pou the rashes green, wi roots sae white;  
O’ which, as weel as my young fancy cou’d,  
For thee I plet the flow’ry belt and snood.’

Allan Ramsay, *Gentle Shepberd*, act ii. sc. 4.

**rid.** ‘I remember two young fellows who rid in the same squadron of a troop of horse.’ *Spectator*, Aug. 24, 1711.

This form is in present use in Somersetshire and Gloucestershire:

‘He walked all the way there, Sir: but he rid home again.’ (Swanswick.)

**rose, participle.**

• ‘And I was ta’en for him, and he for me;  
And thereupon these ERRORS are arose.’

*Comedy of Errors*, v. 1. 386.

**272. sod.** Genesis xxv. 29.

**see.** This preterite is well known as a provincialism. It does not indeed represent the Saxon *SEAH* so justly as the Queen’s English *saw*; but it usefully exemplifies a prevalent tendency, which has been touched upon at 180,

**181, 186.** In Shakspeare's time it was heard high up in the world: Lord Sandys says of the newly fashionable folk—

'*L. San.* They have all new legs, and lame ones; one would take it, That neuer see 'em pace before,—' *Henry VIII*, i. 3. 12.

**shook.** The preterite form was much adopted for the participle from the seventeenth to the early part of the present century. Thus Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vi. 219:—

'All Heaven  
Resounded, and had Earth been then, all Earth  
Had to her Center shook.'

And Edmund Burke, while at Dublin College, writing to an old schoolfellow, says,—

'You ask me if I read? I deferred answering this question, till I could say I did; which I can almost do, for this day I have shook off idleness and begun to buckle to.' (March, 1746-7.)

And Samuel Taylor Coleridge:—

'For oh! big gall-drops, shook from Folly's wing,  
Have blackened the fair promise of my spring.'

**shotten.** 'In that nooke-shotten Ile of Albion.'

Shakspeare, *Henry V*, iii. 5. 14.

Compare *cup-shotten*, Cotgrave, s. v. *Pure*. Probably also Falstaff's 'shotten herring' belongs here.

**shof.** In a Romance of the date 1450 or later we have *shof* as a preterite, where we now use *shoved*:—

'And he shof theron so sore that he bar hym from his horse to the grounde.'—*Merlyn*, p. 265.

sung, participle of *singe*. *Gentle Shepherd*, act ii. sc. 1.

**slang.** 1 Samuel xvii. 49.

**spoke**, participle. In Shakspeare, *King John*, iv. 1. 51;  
*King Richard II*, i. 1. 77.

**stricken.** This old participle, meaning 'gone,' 'advanced,'

is now quite extinct. We read it in Luke i, 7, 'well stricken in years;' and we retain it in the compound *poverty-stricken*, which means 'far gone in poverty,' extremely poor. In Sidney's *Arcadia* (ed. 1599), p. 5, we read, 'He being already well stricken in years.'

237. *took*. See what has been said under *shook*.

• 'Too divine to be mistook.'—Milton, *Arcades*.

*waxen*. Jeremiah v. 27, 28 :—

'They are become great and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine.'

*worth*. Mediæval participle. See below, 283.

*ywroken*. Spenser, *Colin Clouts come home againe*, 921 :—

'Through judgement of the gods to been ywroken.'

This verb was anciently conjugated *wrece*, *wræc*, *wrecen*; but it has lost the strong preterite, and adopted the more prevalent form in *-ed*. Thus Smollett :—

'I wreaked my resentment upon the innocent cause of my disgraces.'

*wrat*. This preterite form occurs in Raleigh's correspondence under date May 29, 1586 :

'And the sider which I wrat to you for.'—Letter xv, ed. Edwards.

*wrote*, participle.

'I have wrote to you three or four times.'—*Spectator*, No. 344 (1712).

*Strong Verbs which have adopted the Weak Form.*

274. Notwithstanding the tenacity of which we have spoken above, there is a manifest tendency in these strong verbs to merge themselves gradually into the more numerous class of the weak verbs. Instances of this transition :—

| PRESENT. | PRETERITE. | PARTICIPLE. |               |
|----------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| acwele   | acwæl      | acwolen     | <i>quell</i>  |
| bace     | boc        | bacen       | <i>bake</i>   |
| beorge   | bearh      | borgen      | <i>borrow</i> |

| PRESENT. | PRETERITE. | PARTICIPLE. |                        |
|----------|------------|-------------|------------------------|
| brede    | bræd       | broden      | <i>braid</i>           |
| bruce    | breac      | brocen      | <i>brook</i>           |
| buge     | beah       | bogen       | <i>bow</i>             |
| byrne    | barn       | burnen      | <i>burn</i>            |
| ceowe    | ceaw       | gecowen     | <i>cbew</i>            |
| climbe   | clomm      | clumben     | <i>climb</i>           |
| crawe    | creow      | crawen      | <i>crow</i>            |
| creope   | creap      | cropen      | <i>creep</i>           |
| delfe    | dealf      | dolfen      | <i>delve</i>           |
| dufe     | deaf       | dofen       | <i>dive</i>            |
| fealde   | feold      | fealden     | <i>fold</i>            |
| fleote   | fleat      | floten      | <i>float</i>           |
| frete    | fræt       | freten      | <i>fret</i>            |
| geote    | geat       | goten       | <i>yote (= pour)</i>   |
| glide    | glad       | gliden      | <i>glide</i>           |
| grafe    | grof       | grafen      | <i>grave</i>           |
| heawe    | heow       | heawen      | <i>bew</i>             |
| hele     | hæl        | holen       | <i>beal</i>            |
| hleape   | hleop      | hleapen     | <i>leap</i>            |
| hreowe   | hreaw      | hrowen      | <i>rue</i>             |
| leoge    | leah       | logen       | <i>lie (as a liar)</i> |
| luce     | leac       | locen       | <i>lock</i>            |
| mete     | mæt        | meten       | <i>mete or measure</i> |
| murne    | mearn      | mornen      | <i>mourn</i>           |
| reoce    | reac       | rocen       | <i>reek</i>            |
| rowe     | reow       | rowen       | <i>row</i>             |
| scufe    | sceaf      | scofen      | <i>shove</i>           |
| scype    | scop       | sceapen     | <i>shape</i>           |
| slape    | slep       | slapen      | <i>sleep</i>           |
| smeoce   | smeac      | smocen      | <i>smoke</i>           |
| spurne   | spearn     | spornen     | <i>spurn</i>           |
| steorfe  | stærf      | storfen     | <i>starve</i>          |
| swelge   | sweah      | swolgen     | <i>swallow</i>         |
| teoge    | teah       | togen       | <i>tow</i>             |
| þersce   | þærsc      | þorscen     | <i>ibresb</i>          |
| þringe   | þrang      | geþrunge    | <i>ibrong</i>          |
| wade     | wod        | wæden       | <i>wade</i>            |
| wealde   | weold      | gewealden   | <i>wield</i>           |

**275.** This list does not include the strong verbs that have altogether died out since Saxon times. It only contains those ancient strong verbs which still exist in the language under weak forms. The list is of practical utility for reference in reading Chaucer or the Elizabethan writers. Many a strong form, now unfamiliar to us, lingers in their pages. The verb *mete*, to measure, is one that we do not often use at all, for the whole root is, as Webster says, obsolescent. In our Bible it has the weak conjugation, as—

‘A nation meted out and troden downe.’—*Isaiab* xviii. 2.

‘Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out heauen with the spanne, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hilles in a balance?’—*Isaiab* xl. 12.

But in Chapman’s *Iliad*, iii. 327, we find the strong preterite of this verb:—

‘Then Hector, Priam’s martial son, stepp’d forth, and met the ground.’

In some cases slight relics of the old strong conjugation are still preserved, though the verb itself has gone off into the weak or mixed form. Thus the verb to *lose* is now declined, *lose*, *lost*, *lost*. But in Saxon it was *leose*, *leas*, *loren*: and from this ancient conjugation we have retained the participle as an adjective, *lorn*, *forlorn*. Participially it may be seen as late as Milton, *Paradise Lost*, x. 921:—

‘My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,  
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?’

**276.** Sometimes old forms long discontinued crop up again. It would appear that *dive*, *dove*, is recognised on yonder side of the Atlantic, for it figures not only in the poetry of Longfellow, but also in American prose:—

‘I know not why, but the whole herd [of walruses] seemed suddenly to take alarm, and all dove down with a tremendous splash almost at the same instant.’ Dr. Hayes, *Open Polar Sea*, ch. xxxvi.

To set against this gradual defection of strong verbs towards the prevalent form, we rarely find even a slight example of movement in the opposite direction. New verbs are hardly ever added to the ranks of the strong; whatever verb is invented or borrowed is naturally conjugated after the prevalent pattern. There are a few exceptions to this rule, all the more marked on account of their rarity; such as the Scottish formula of verdict *Not proven*. Here we have a French verb which has taken the form of a strong Gothic participle.

Another of this sort is the preterite *pled* of the French verb *to plead*, said by Dr. Trench to be one of the many so-called Americanisms that really are old English, as this form appears in Spenser<sup>1</sup>. Not long ago it appeared in an English periodical:—

‘The well-known story of the presbyter deposed from his office for forging the Acts of Paul and Thecla, although he pled that he had done so from the love of Paul.’—*Contemporary Review*, April 1869, p. 602.

### *The Substantive Verb.*

277. But the member of this class which above all others demands our attention is the substantive verb *to be*: or rather, the fragments of two or three ancient verbs which join to fill the place of the substantive verb. The ‘substantive verb’ is so called, not from any connection with the part of speech called a substantive; but for a distinct reason. It is the verb which expresses least of all verbs; for it expresses nothing but to have existence. Every other verb implies existence besides that particular thing which it asserts: as if I say *I think*, I imply that I am in existence, or else I could neither think nor do anything else. The verb substantive, then, is the verb which, unlike all other verbs,

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<sup>1</sup> *English Past and Present*, Seventh Edition, 1870; p. 204.

confines itself to the assertion of existence, which in all other verbs is contained by implication. The Greek word for existence or being was *οὐσία*, and this was done into Latin by the word *substantia*, and by this avenue did the verb which predicates nothing but existence come to be named the substantive verb.

278. It seems so natural and easy to say that a thing is or was or has been, that we might almost incline to fancy the substantive verb to be the oldest and most primitive of verbs. But there is more reason for thinking contrariwise, that it was a mature and comparatively late product of the human mind. The French word *été* for *been* is not an old word: we know its history. It is derived from *stare*, the Latin word for standing, as is witnessed by *stato*, the Italian participle of the substantive verb. There are other cases in which the substantive verb is of no very obscure origin. We seem to be able to trace our word *be*, for example, by the help of the Latin *fui* and the Greek *φύω*, to the concrete sense of growing. It has even been thought, and not at all unreasonably, that the stock of our *be* may be no other than that familiar word for building and dwelling which in Scotland is to *big*, in Icelandic is *búa*, and which appears in the second member of so many of our Danish town-names in the form of *by*, as *Rugby*, *Whitby*. In Icelandic 'búa búi sínu,' is to 'big ane's ain bigging,' i. e. to have one's own homestead<sup>1</sup>. The history of our preterite *was* seems to point in a like direction. Traces seem to be preserved in the Mæso-Gothic *wisan*, to abide, sojourn; compared with the form *wizon*, to live. In these cases, the concrete sense of growing or standing or building or dwelling, has been as it were washed or worn out of the verb, and nothing left but the pale underlying texture of being.

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<sup>1</sup> *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, Cleasby and Vigfusson, v. *Búa*.

279. I one day expressed to an intimate friend my regret that the collectors of vocabularies among savage tribes did not tell us something about the verb 'to be,' and especially I instanced the admirable word-collections of Mr. Wallace. To this conversation I owe the pleasure of being able to quote Mr. Wallace's own observations on this subject in his reply to my friend's query. He says:—

'As to such words as "to be," it is impossible to get them in any savage language till you know how to converse in it, or have some intelligent interpreter who can do so. In most of the languages such extremely general words do not exist, and the attempt to get them through an ordinary interpreter would inevitably lead to error. . . . Even in such a comparatively high language as the Malay, it is difficult to express "to be" in any of our senses, as the words used would express a number of other things as well, and only serve for "to be" by a roundabout process.'

From Western Australia, where the natives are forming an intermediate speech for communication with our people, and are converting morsels of English to their daily use, we have the following apposite illustrations:—'The words *get down* have been chosen as a synonym for the verb 'to be,' and the first question of a friendly native would be *Mamman all right get down?* meaning 'Is father quite well?' for, strange to say, *Mamman* is the native word for father, whilst *N-angan* or *Oongan* stands for mother.' And a little further on, after mentioning the native fondness for grease, which they prefer to soap as an abstergent:—'A neighbour of ours told me of two natives who presented themselves at her door to beg for grease, and who accounted for the dried-up condition of their legs, to which they ruefully pointed, by saying "in jail no grease get down;" the poor fellows having just been liberated from prison, where the authorities had failed to recognise unguents as a substitute for soap<sup>1</sup>.'

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<sup>1</sup> *An Australian Parsonage; or, the Settler and the Savage in Western Australia.* By Mrs. Edward Millett. London: Edward Stanford, 1872.



280. The great master of Oriental philology, Ewald, seems to think that the Hebrew substantive verb היה was developed from an ancient root meaning 'to make, prepare.'

In Sanskrit, as the substantive verb, has been developed from a root signifying *to breathe*, and it seems probable that this was the original sense of the Greek *ἔστι*, the Latin *est*, the German *ist*, and our *is*. Here we catch a glimpse of the antiquity of our modern languages, and also of the process by which the most familiar instruments of speech have been prepared for their present use.

As the presentive noun fades or ripens into the symbol pronoun; as the pronoun passes into the still more subtle conjunction,—so also do verbs graduate from particular to general use, from such a particular sense as *stand* or *grow* or *dwell* or *breathe*, to the large and general sense of *being*. Nor does the trans-animation stop here.

### *The Symbol Verb.*

281. It is not when this verb expresses simple existence that it has reached its highest state of refinement. When Coleridge said 'God has all the power that *is*,' he made this verb a predicate of existence. In this case the verb *to be* has still a concrete function, and is a presentive word: but in its state of highest abstraction it is equally in place in every proposition whatever, and is the purest of symbols. We can express 'John runs' by 'John *is* running'; and every proposition is capable of being rendered into this form. The verb substantive here exhibits the highest possible form of verbal abstraction, and has become a pure symbol. It is the mere instrument of predication, and conveys by itself no idea whatever. It is the most symbolic of all the symbolic verbs, and it is symbolised to the utmost that is possible. For it expresses only that which every verb

must express in order to be a verb, viz. the mental act of judgment.

FORMS OF THE SUBSTANTIVE- AND SYMBOL-VERB.

|                                                    |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Indicative present                                 | am, art, is : are.     |
| „ past                                             | was, wast, was : were. |
| Infinitive, imperative, and<br>subjunctive present | } be.                  |
| Subjunctive past                                   |                        |
| Participle present                                 | being.                 |
| „ past                                             | been.                  |

282. The substantive verb has been more tenacious of its personal forms than our other verbs, and the remarks in the beginning of this chapter about the disuse of the personal forms are less applicable here. Until the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries there was a larger variety of these forms, among which may be specified the *N*-forms of the third person plural, *arn* and *weren*.

The following is from one of the versified precepts of good manners which are so frequent in the literature of the fifteenth century.

‘Thus God þat is begynnere & former of alle thyng,  
In nomber, weyght, & mesure alle þis world wrought he;  
And mesure he taughte us in alle his wise werkis,  
Ensample by the extremittees þat vicious *arn* euer.’

That is to say, Extremes are always wrong.

This is, however, a matter of small importance in comparison with another remark which must here be made. The symbol-verb is not all of one root, it is a verbal conjugation made up of several roots. For, not to speak of *am*, *art*, and *are*, it is plain that we have at least the fragments of two verbs, whose infinitives in Saxon were *BEON* and *WESAN*. The former lives in our infinitive to *be*. In

German the latter is retained as a neuter noun *daß Wesen*, a word much used for being, existence, substance, essence. It is for the German language, not indeed a substantive-verb, but a 'substantive-noun,' or noun expressive of existence. Also they have from the same source *gewesen*, the participle of their symbol-verb.

283. From the Strong verbs there sprang yet another substantive-verb which is now rarely used, and only in poetry. It is the verb *worth*, to be or become. It belongs to the older form of our language, rather than to modern English. In Saxon it was thus conjugated: *WEORÐAN*, *WEARÐ*, *GEWORDEN*. The whole verb is still in full force in German: *werden*, *ward*, *geworden*. But with us it was already archaic in Chaucer's time, and it is rarely found in his writings. The participial form occurs in his *Troilus and Creseide*, where he is saying of love between the sexes, that without it

'No lifes wiht is worth or may endure.'

i.e. No living thing has come into being (*iſt geworden*) or can escape extermination.

In this place it is the participle. But the form in which it is most generally known is the imperative or subjunctive-imperative: as, *Wo worth this day*; that is, 'Wo be to this day,' as *Ezekiel xxx. 2*, and in *The Lady of the Lake*,—

- 'Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,  
That cost thy life, my gallant grey.'

We find the infinitive *worthe* in the *Tale of Gamelyn* :

- 'Cursed mot he worthe bothe fleisch and blood,  
That ever do priour or abbot ony good!'

In the following quotation from *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, 744, we have the infinitive twice, and once with the ancient termination:—

‘Now mot ich soutere his sone · setten to schole  
 And ich a beggers brot · on þe booke lerne,  
 And worþ to a writere · & wiþ a lorde dwell,  
 Oper falsly to a frere · þe fend for to seruen!  
 So of þat beggers brot · a bychop schal worþen,—’

TRANSLATION.—*Now each cobbler may set his son to school, and every beggar's brat may learn on the book and become a writer and dwell with a lord; or iniquitously become a friar, the fiend to serve! So of that beggar's brat, a bishop shall be made, &c.*

In Shakspeare we find this verb played off against the substantive *worth*: ‘Her worth, worth yours;’ that is, in Latin, ‘Ejus meritum fiat vestrum<sup>1</sup>.’ *Measure for Measure*, v. i. 495.

284. Regarded as a product of human speech, the symbol-verb is very remarkable. The production of this particular word is to the verb-system what the leader is to a tree. Cut it off, and the tree will try to produce another leader. If we could imagine the whole elaborate system of verbs to be utterly abolished from memory and consigned to blank oblivion, insomuch that there remained no materials for speech but nouns, pronouns, and the rest, the verb would yet grow again, as surely as a tree when it is cut down (unless it die) will sprout again. The verb would form itself again, and it would repeat its ancient career, and the topmost product of that career would be as before, the symbol-verb to *be*. Proof enough of this will be seen in the fact that many roots have in our stock of languages made a run for this position; and in the further fact that languages whose development has been wide of ours, as the Hebrew, have culminated in the self-same result—the substantive-verb and out of it the symbol-verb. In the third section of the Syntax we shall have to consider this symbol-verb in regard to the effects which it has wrought in the structure of language.

<sup>1</sup> In the edition of Messrs. Clark and Wright, vol. i. p. 387, may be seen the conjectures which this passage has provoked.

So much for the strong verbs and the symbol-verbs which they have produced.

285. We cannot close this section without a few words of comment. The venerable sire of Gothic philology, Jacob Grimm, has said of the strong preterites that they constitute one of the chief beauties of our family of languages, 'eine Haupt-schönheit unsrer Sprachen.' In this sentiment all philologers seem agreed.

The question naturally arises, How did so very singular a contrivance come into existence? The question is put here, not so much for the certainty of the answer that can be given, as for the purpose of directing the student to enquiries which will supply a definite aim to his more extended investigations. It was surmised by Grimm that the origin of this internal and vocalic change is to be sought in reduplication. He particularly instances the preterite *hight*, which in the ordinary Saxon form was *hēt* but which appears also in the nobler form of *heht*, as on the Alfred Jewel: *ÆLFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCEAN*, Alfred me ordered make. When to this is added that in Mæso-Gothic the same preterite appears as *haihait*, it looks as if a reduplication of the root had by vocalic compensation simplified itself into the form *hēt*. The German *ging*, preterite of the verb *go*, has again a form which might easily have been produced by a reduplication of the root. But next to *heht*, there is no example so striking as that of the verb to *do*, which is strong by its participle *done*, and yet in its preterite has the appearance of a weak form. It is redeemed from the appearance of inconsistency by supposing *dyde*, the Saxon form of *did*, to be a reduplication of the root *do*, and so of a piece with the strong preterites, only less altered. That reduplication would have been resorted to in the growth of verbs, as a figure of intensity for the

expression of past time and acts really done, seems almost as natural as that the same means should have been used to give plurality to nouns. Moreover we have examples in other languages, and we know as a matter of fact that reduplication has been resorted to as a means of expressing past time, in the development both of the Latin and of the Greek verb. Latin instances are *didici*, *poposci*, *tetigi*, *populi*. In Greek the most conspicuous instrument for the expression of past time is reduplication: *τέτυφα*, *τέτυμμαι*; *πεποίηκα*, *πεποίημαι*; *πέπραχα*, *πέπραγμαι*; *τετέλεκα*, *τετέλεσμαι*.

286. But while this may explain genetically (as the Germans say) the origin of our strong preterites, it is by no means sufficient as an account of the state in which they actually appear in the older languages of the Gothic family. The earliest extant forms are not reduplicative, but they shew scattered and impaired examples of reduplication, as it were the relics of an old formation; and yet these same conjugations are far too highly disciplined for us to be able to regard them as the mere ruin of some antiquated system. Reduplication may indeed have been the principle in an earlier stage, but we ask what was the principle in this particular stage, in which we observe so much order and regularity. And the answer to this seems to be that the Ablaut succeeded to Reduplication, and supplied a new and vigorous principle of reconstruction. See 124.

## II. MIXED VERBS.

287. The second class of verbs are those which may conveniently be called Mixed, because they unite in themselves the characters of the first and third classes.

Some critics would deny them the distinction of being a class at all. They insist that there are but two principles

at work in the verb-flexions; namely, internal change and external addition. And this is the fact. But then, the variety of relations in which two systems are ranged may easily give rise to a third series of conditions. When the sun peers through the foliage of an aged oak, it produces on the ground those oval spots of dubious light which the poet has called a mottled shade. Each oval has its own outline, and its own particular degree of luminousness; but where two of them overlap each other a third condition of light is induced. Such an overlapping is this sample of mixed verbs, a compromise between the strong and the weak.

288. In the formation of the preterite, they suffer both internal vowel-change, and also external addition. They form the participle in *t* or *d*. Such are the following:—

| PRESENT. | PRETERITE.        | PARTICIPLE.       |
|----------|-------------------|-------------------|
| bring    | brought           | brought           |
| buy      | bought            | bought            |
| catch    | caught            | caught            |
| creep    | crept             | crept             |
| deal     | delt <sup>1</sup> | delt <sup>1</sup> |
| feel     | felt              | felt              |
| fetch    | fo t              | fought *          |
| flee     | fled              | fled              |
| hear     | herd <sup>1</sup> | herd              |
| keep     | kept              | kept              |
| kneel    | knelt             | knelt             |
| lean     | lent              | lent              |
| leap     | lept              | lept              |
| leave    | left              | left              |
| lose     | lost              | lost              |
| mean     | ment <sup>1</sup> | ment <sup>1</sup> |
| meet     | met               | met               |

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<sup>1</sup> In a few instances, such as *dealt*, *beard*, *meant*, the ordinary spelling has been departed from in order to exhibit to the eye as well as to the ear that there is a change in the internal vowel.

| PRESENT.   | PRETERITE.     | PARTICIPLE. |
|------------|----------------|-------------|
| owe        | ought*         | ...         |
| pitch      | pight          | ...         |
| reach      | raught         | raught      |
| [reave]    | reft           | reft        |
| seek       | sought         | sought      |
| sell       | sold           | sold        |
| shoe       | shod           | shod        |
| shriek     | shright        | ...         |
| sike       | sight = sighed | ...         |
| sleep      | slept          | slept       |
| spet, spit | spat, spate    | spytt       |
| stand      | stood          | stood *     |
| sweep      | swept          | swept       |
| teach      | taught         | taught      |
| tell       | told           | told        |
| think      | thought        | thought     |
| weep       | wept           | wept        |
| wot        | wist *         | wist *      |
| work       | wrought        | wrought     |

*Remarks on the Forms signed with an Asterisk.*

**289. Fought.** It occurs in Congreve's *Way of the World*, iv. 4, where Sir Wilfull Witwoud says to Millamant—

‘I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening, if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have fought a walk with you.’—Ed. Tonson, 1710.

**Ought** is historically the preterite of *owe*. But it is now a preterite only in form: it is a present in its ordinary usage as an auxiliary. The present *owe* has not accompanied the preterite in its transition to this moral and semi-symbolic use. When the old preterite had deserted the service of the verb *owe* in its original sense, that verb supplied itself with a new preterite of the modern type, *owed*. The distinction between *ought*, the old preterite, and *owed*, the new preterite, is now quite established, and no confusion happens. But the reader of our old poets should observe that *ought* does duty for both these senses. Here we have it in



Spenser, in a place where the modern usage would require *owed*:—

‘Now were they liegmen to this Ladie free,  
And her knights service ought, to hold of her in fee.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 1. 44.

**290. Stood.** That passing of strong verbs over into the ranks of the weak, which was the subject of remark in the last section, is often due to mere gregariousness, or the common human proneness to follow with the greatest numbers. But here we may quote an instance in which a like change belongs rather to an active than to a passive movement. In the sixteenth century there sprang up the form ‘understanded,’ and this form associated itself in a marked manner with the contention of the time to have a Bible and Liturgy ‘understanded of the people.’ Thus a weak form was temporarily substituted for a mixed form, not by way of negligence, but by the emphasis of intellectual self-assertion.

**Wist** is sometimes referred to a present *I wis*. But it is a fair question whether there is or ever was such a verb as *I wis*. It is in fact almost a metaphysical problem. It is something like the question whether *pas* and *point* in French are negative particles or only adverbs. Whether there ever was such a verb as ‘*I wis*’ is such a problem in English philology. Certainly Spenser believed there was, and in the century before him it was believed. It grew out of a change in the aspect of an old adverb *gewis* (German *geriſſ* to this day) which became a stock word for the close of lines in the form *iwis*, *ywis*, *I wis*, *I wiss*; and then the preterite *wist* helped out the grammatical conception that it was a verb.

**Wist** the participle is more rare: it occurs in the phrase ‘had I wist’, for which see below, chap. xi. sect. iii.

**291.** These verbs are a still less numerous class than the former; and they do not admit of addition to their numbers any more than the strong verbs. They would seem to have been mostly the growth of a limited period; that, namely,

wherein the transition of habit was taking place from the strong to the weak methods of conjugation.

But, insignificant as this class is in point of numbers, it contains within it a small batch of verbs of very high importance. It contains all those verbs which are commonly known as Auxiliaries. And these are little less than the whole remainder of symbolic verbs, after the two already mentioned in the previous section, which may be called the primary symbol verbs, namely, *be* and *worth*. The very fact of so well-marked a group of words being contained within this division of Mixed Verbs, is some justification of the division. The help-verbs are seen to be an ancient group from the fact that they hold (for the most part) the same place in the German and other branches of our family as they do in our English language.

|       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| can   | could       |
| dare  | durst       |
| may   | might       |
| note  | moste, must |
| shall | should      |
| will  | would       |

These verbs, it will be seen, are destitute of participles; and this is merely because they have dropped off through disuse. In like manner, and from the same cause, few of them have infinitives. Indeed, none of them have infinitives of symbolic use. As symbolics, it has been their function to serve the participles and infinitives of other verbs, and to have none of their own.

292. We can indeed say 'to will' and 'to dare'; but in neither instance would the sense or the tone of the word be the same as when we say, 'it will rain,' or 'I dare say.' So completely has the sense of dare-ing evaporated from the latter auxiliary, that 'I dare say' is a different thing from

'I dare to say.' The latter might be negatived by 'I dare not to say'; but 'I dare not say' would not be the just negative of 'I dare say.' In that expression, the verb 'dare' has lost its own colour, and it is infused into 'say.' And therefore the two often merge by symphytism into one word, as in the following, from a newspaper report of a public speech:—

'I daresay you have heard of the sportsman who taught himself to shoot steadily by loading for a whole season with blank cartridge only.'

These verbs are all called by the common title of auxiliaries; yet there is a gradation of quality in them, which is to be measured by their relative retention of presentive power.

**293. Will** has still a good deal. *Wilt thou have, &c.?*  
*I will!*

This verb in its presentive sense retains a pair of old flexional forms which are never found in the symbolic sense. These are *willest, willeth*. 'God willeth Samuel to yield unto the importunity of the people' (1 Sam. viii, Contents); 'It is not of him that willeth' (Rom. ix. 16).

'Willest be asked, and thou shalt answer then.'

Frederic W. H. Myers, *St. Paul*.

This verb has also an infinitive as, 'to will and to do'; and in this respect differs from the more highly symbolic *shall*, of which an infinitive was never heard in our language. We see in the verb *will* the graduated movement from the presentive to the symbolic state.

And not unfrequently this gradation is played upon, as in the following dialogue:—

'*Cres.* Doe you thinke I will?

*Troy.* No, but something may be done that we wil not.'

Shakspeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 4. 91.

**294.** *May* has long been without an infinitive, but there was one as late as the sixteenth century, in the form *mowe*. An example may be seen above, **71**; and in the *Secret Instructions* from Henry VII respecting the young Queen of Naples:—

‘And to knowe the specialties of the title and value therof in every behalf as nere as they shall mowe.’—*National Manuscripts*, Part I, 20 Hen. VII.

*Can* originally meant ‘to know,’ and in this presentive sense we meet with an infinitive which appears as *konne* in the fourteenth, and as *to con* in the fifteenth century.

‘Thanne seyde Melibe, I shal nat konne answere vn to so manye reasons as ye putten to me & shewen.’—Chaucer, *Tale of Melibeus*.

‘To mine well-beloved son, I greet you well, and advise you to think once of the day of your father’s counsel to learn the law, for he said many times that whosoever should dwell at Paston, should have need to con [i.e. know how to] defend himself.’—*Paston Letters*, Letter x. (A.D. 1444-5).

The French equivalent for this *con* would be *savoir*, and in fact the English auxiliary *can*, *could*, is largely an imitation of that French verb.

**295.** Some auxiliaries have become obsolete. Such is *mote* the present, of which *must* is the preterite. It lingered till recent times as a formula of wishing well or ill, and indeed an extant example has been given above, at **210**, note. Its place has now been taken by *may*.

In a ballad on the Battle of Flodden Field, A.D. 1513, this benison is bestowed on the Earl of Surrey:—

‘In the myddyll warde was the Erle of Surrey,  
Ever more blessyd mote thowe be;  
The ffadyr of witte, well call him we may;  
The debite [deputy] most trusty of Englund was he.’

**296.** *Gan* is quite extinct: it was used as now we use *did*, and was probably extinguished by the preference for the latter. This auxiliary must not be too closely associated with the more familiar word *began*. The latter is a com-

pound of *gan*, but the sense of commencing is the property of the compound rather than of the root.

'Of a wryght I wylle you telle  
That some tyme in thys land gan dwelle.'

*The Wryght's Chaste Wife* (A.D. 1460).

**297.** *Let* in early times signified the causation of some action. Thus it is said of William the Conqueror by the vernacular historian that he 'let speer out' all the property of the country so narrowly that there was never a rood of land or a cow or a pig that was not entered in his book—'swa swyðe nearwelice he hit lett ut aspyrian<sup>1</sup>.' This 'let' is a very different thing from the light symbol now in use, as when one says to a friend, 'Will you let your servant bring my horse?' To this levity of symbolism it had already arrived in the Elizabethan era:—

'Let Gryll be Gryll, and have his hoggish minde;  
But let us hence depart whilst wether serves and winde.'

*The Faery Queene*, Bk. ii. *end*.

**298.** There are two verbs of a character so peculiar that they are for distinction sake reserved to a place at the end of this section of mixed verbs. The first is the verb which, though common to German and the other dialects, is yet in one sense peculiar to English, namely as an auxiliary. Speaking generally, we share our auxiliaries with the rest of the Gothic family, but there is one all our own. It is *do*, *did*, *done*. The peculiarity of its form has been touched on at the close of the former section.

This symbolic verb has already been treated above, **242**: here it only remains to observe its twofold character (1) as an auxiliary, in which use it has no participle, and (2) as a general substitute or representative verb, in which it is complete in all parts. In both characters it has acquired its

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<sup>1</sup> *Two Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, p. 218.

peculiar place in our language through imitation of the French *faire*.

299. The other is the verb *get, got, got*, which is a more peculiarly English auxiliary, and is singular in this respect, that its participle has an auxiliary function; and further, it is remarkable for that which it expresses, as it gives to the English language a Middle Voice, or a power of verbal expression which is neither active nor passive. Thus we say to *get* acquitted, beaten, confused, dressed, elected, frightened, killed, married, offended, qualified, respected, shaved, washed. This is an instance of a mixed verb that has detached itself from the ranks of the strong verbs, where we must continue to retain in its due place the elder conjugation—*get, gat, gotten*.

300. The power of expression which our language possesses by means of the auxiliaries has sometimes been undervalued. The great proportion of attention which men of learning have devoted to the inflected languages, has prevented our own verbal system from receiving the appreciation which is due to it. The following quotation from Southey may not unfitly close this section.

'I had spoken as it were abstractedly, and the look which accompanied the words was rather cogitative than regardant. The Bhow Begum laid down her snuff-box and replied, entering into the feeling as well as echoing the words, "It *ought* to be written in a book,—certainly it ought."

'They may talk as they will of the dead languages. Our auxiliary verbs give us a power which the ancients, which all their varieties of mood and inflections of tense, never could attain. "It *must* be written in a book," said I, encouraged by her manner. The mood was the same, the tense was the same; but the gradation of meaning was marked in a way which a Greek or Latin grammarian might have envied as well as admired.'—*The Doctor*, ch. vii. A. 1.

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### III. WEAK VERBS.

301. The third class of verbs are those which form both their preterite and their participle by the addition of -ED, as *I hope, I hoped, I have hoped*. In some verbs it takes the

form of changing *d* into *t*, as *send*, *sent*; *wend*, *went*; *bend*, *bent*. We must consider this *NT* as a commutation for *NDADÉ*, or, as it was sometimes written, *NDE*; modern *-nded*. The preterite of the Saxon *sendan* was not *sendade* but *sende*. This condensed formation takes place not only with verbs in *-ND* but also with those in *-LD* and *-RD*.

Other modes of condensation are used, as *made*, short for *makéd*, Saxon *MACODE*.

These succinct forms of the weak verb must not lead to a confusion with either of the foregoing classes. Most of them are contained in the following list:—

| PRESENT. | PRETERITE. | PARTICIPLE. |
|----------|------------|-------------|
| bend     | bent †     | bent        |
| bleed    | bled       | bled        |
| breed    | bred       | bred        |
| build    | built †    | built       |
| clothe   | clad †     | clad        |
| feed     | fed        | fed         |
| gild     | gilt †     | gilt        |
| gird     | girt †     | girt        |
| have     | had        | had         |
| lay      | laid       | laid        |
| lead     | lād, * led | glād, * led |
| learn    | learnt †   | learnt †    |
| lend     | lent       | lent        |
| light    | lit        | lit         |
| make     | made       | made        |
| pen      | pent       | pent        |
| read     | . . .      | rād *       |
| rend     | rent       | rent        |
| send     | sent       | sent        |
| speed    | sped       | sped        |
| spend    | spent      | spent       |
| spill    | spilt      | spilt       |
| wend     | went †     | went *      |

Those which are marked with a dagger have also the form in *-ed*.

*Remarks on the Forms signed with an Asterisk.*

302. *lad.* Spenser, *Faery Queene*, iv. 8. 2.

*plad.* Chaucer, *Prologue*, 532.

*red.* Spenser, *Faery Queene*, iv. 8. 29.

*went.* This participle is provincial, and very widely spread—I know not how wide. I should say that ‘to have gone’ is literary English, and that the popular form almost everywhere is ‘to have went.’ Certainly it is so in the west. Those who still travel by the highways will know the sound of this, —‘ You should have went on the other side of the road.’

303. Of the usual form of the weak verb it will not be necessary to give many examples. They are all of the following pattern, and the list is alphabetic, to intimate the indefiniteness of their extent.

| PRESENT.  | PRETERITE and PARTICIPLE. |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| allow     | allowed                   |
| believe   | believed                  |
| change    | changed                   |
| defend    | defended                  |
| educate   | educated                  |
| figure    | figured                   |
| germinate | germinated                |
| happen    | happened                  |
| injure    | injured                   |
| joke      | joked                     |
| kindle    | kindled                   |
| laugh     | laughed                   |
| mention   | mentioned                 |
| oil       | oiled                     |
| present   | presented                 |
| question  | questioned                |
| revere    | revered                   |
| succeed   | succeeded                 |
| tarnish   | tarnished                 |
| utter     | uttered                   |
| vacillate | vacillated                |
| wonder    | wondered                  |
| yield     | yielded                   |



**304.** To this third class belongs the bulk of English verbs. It is regarded as the youngest form of verbal inflection, from the relation in which we find it standing towards the two classes previously described. It is the only verbal inflection which can be properly said to be in a living and active state, because it applies to new words; whereas the others cannot make new verbs after their own pattern. There is a constant tendency of the strong and mixed verbs to fall into the forms of the weak, but no corresponding movement in the reverse direction.

There is, however, what may at first sight look like it—there is a recoil movement. Writers of the last century went further in the translation of strong verbs into weak forms than the sense of the nation has approved, and consequently there are in the literature of the eighteenth century many weak forms like the following, where we should now use the strong or mixed form :—

*shaked.*

‘The very point I shaked my head at.’—Richard Steele, *Spectator*, March 5, 1711.

*meaned.*

‘The sovereign meaned Charles, Duke of Somerset.’ ‘The patriots meaned to make the king odious.’—Horace Walpole, *Royal and Noble Authors*.

*creeped.*

‘Perhaps some secret animosities, naturally to be expected in that situation, had creeped in among the great men, and had enabled the king to recover his authority.’—Hume, *History of England*, ch. xvii.

**305.** While we consider this to be the most recent of our verbal inflections, it is of high antiquity nevertheless. It is common to all the dialects of our family, and in the oldest monuments it is already established. But whatever tokens of antiquity it may boast, the single fact that it has produced

no symbolic verb seems to place it far in the rear of the two previous classes.

The *do* of the weak conjugation has been explained as a relic of the verb *do, did*; as if *hoped* were a condensation of *hope-did*<sup>1</sup>. After what has been said at the close of each of the previous sections, it would seem as if this verb *do, did*, were about to claim a great place as the bridge which unites the three sorts of conjugation. Should this theory be confirmed, the thread of continuity which unites our verbal system, is discovered. And even if it should prove untenable, it will not have been without its use, as temporarily representing the kind of link which philology teaches us to look for between the various formations of which language is composed.

#### IV. VERB-MAKING.

It has been shewn at 216 that the English language can turn a noun or any other word into a verb, and use it as a verb, without any alteration to the form of the word, such as would be caused by the addition of a verbal formative. This does not hinder, however, but that there always have been verbal formatives in the language, and that the number and variety of these is from time to time increased. By Verbal Formative is meant any addition to a word, whether prefix or suffix, which stamps that word as a verb independently of a context.

Such is the suffix *-en*, by means of which, from the substantives *height, haste, length, strength*, are formed the verbs *heighten, hasten, lengthen, strengthen*. From the adjectives *bright, deep, fast, quick, short, wide, tight*, are formed the

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<sup>1</sup> *Science of Language*, by Max Müller, M.A., 1861, p. 219.

verbs *brighten, deepen, fasten, quicken, shorten, widen, tighten*. Other examples of this formation are—*broaden* (Tennyson), *christen, frighten, glisten, harden, lighten, madden, sicken, slacken*. This verbal formative *n* is of Saxon antiquity; but it is quite separate and distinct from the Saxon infinitive form *-an*.

**306.** Such again is the prefix *be-*, by means of which, from the substantives *head, friend, tide*, are formed the verbs *behead, befriend, betide*. This formative is still in operation, but is less active than it formerly was. It enters into sixty-six different verbs in Shakspeare, as appears in Mrs. Cowden Clarke's *Complete Concordance*. They are the following:—*bechance, become, befall, befit, befriend, beget, begin, begnaw, begrime, beguile, behave, behead, behold, behove, behowl, belie, believe, belong, beloved* ('more loving than beloved' *Ant. and Cleop.* i. 2), *bemad, bemele, bemoan, bemock, bemoil, bepaint, bequeath, berattle, bereave, berhyme, beseech, beseeke, beseem, beset, beshrew, besiege, beslobber, besmear, besmirch, besort, besot, bespeak, bespice, bestain, bestead, bestill, bestir, bestow, bestraught, bestrew, bestride, betake, beteem, bethink, bethump, betide, betoken, beloss, betray, betrim, betroth, bewail, beweepe, bewet, bewitch, bewray*.

**307.** Such again is the prefix *un-*, by means of which other words are made beside verbs, as the substantives and adjectives *unbeliever, unjust, unmeet*, &c.; yet it is also a verbal formative because it transforms other words into verbs which even without a context cannot be regarded as being anything else than verbs. Examples:—*unfrock, untie, unlink, unlock*.

**308.** The above examples of verbal formatives are all genuine natives: the next two are after French models.

The prefix *en-* is not only adopted with the French verbs in which it is embodied, as *encroach, enhance*; but it also has

been used by us to make new verbs, and still is so used, as in the following line :—

‘Encharnelled in their fatness, men that smile,—’

Frederick W. H. Myers, *St. John the Baptist*.

The suffix *-fy* is taken from those French words which end in *-fier*, after Latin verbs ending in *-facere*. Examples :—*beatify, beautify, codify, deify, dignify, dulcify, edify, electrify, horrify, modify, mollify, mortify, nullify, qualify, ratify, satisfy, scarify, stultify, unify*.

*dulcify*.

‘He never condescended to anything like direct flattery ; but he felicitously hit upon the topic which he knew would tickle the *amour propre* of those whom he wished to dulcify.’—Lord Campbell, *Life of Lord Lyndhurst*, 1869.

**309.** The verbal formative *-ate* is from the Latin participle passive of the first conjugation : as *aestimatus*, valued. Examples :—*abdicate, captivate, decimate, eradicate, estimate, exculpate, expostulate, indicate, invalidate, liquidate, mitigate, nominate, operate, postulate, venerate*. •

**310.** The above formatives are of great standing in the language ; but that which we have now to mention, the formative *-ize*, is comparatively modern. It occurs in Shakspeare, as *tyrannize* in *King John*, v. 7. 47 ; *partialize*, in *King Richard II*, i. 1. 120 ; *monarchize*, *Id.* iii. 2. 165, but was not in general use until the time of the living generation. This is a formative which we have identified with the Greek verbs in *-ίζω*. Examples :—*advertize, anathematize, anatomize, cauterize, christianize, deodorize, evangelize, fraternize, generalize, macadamize, monopolize, patronize, philosophize, soliloquize, subsidize, symbolize, sympathize, systematize, utilize*.

These verbs have been multiplied indefinitely in our day, partly in consequence of their utility for scientific expression, and partly from the fact that about twenty years ago it

became a toy of University-men to make verbs in *-ize* about all manner of things. A walk for the sake of bodily exercise having been called a 'constitutional,' the verb *constitutionalize* was soon formed thereupon. It was then caught up in country homes, and young ladies who helped the parson in any way were said to *parochialize*. A. H. Clough, when engaged on his edition of Plutarch's *Lives* in English, used to report progress to his correspondents by saying that he devoted so much of his time to *Plutarchizing*.

**311.** Many of these verbs are now more commonly written with *-ise* than with *-ize*. That is to say, we are met here again, as in so many other passages of our language, with that quiet unnoticed French influence. Here it will probably prove stronger than Greek, and recover that tenure which the Greek sentiment has long had in quiet possession.

This form may be regarded as Greek, in compliance with the view that has been established and consciously acted upon for a long time past. But though it has now acquired a right to be called a Greek form, it does not follow that the first suggestion of it was due to the Greek language. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is nevertheless true, that words have the singular power of effecting a change of ancestry. As regards the present case, reason will be given in the next chapter for supposing that this 'Greek form' had at its first beginning a French origin.

**312.** The English verbs present so great a variety of age and featuring, that they may as a whole be compared to a venerable pile of buildings, which have grown by successive additions through a series of centuries. One spirit animates the whole, and gives it a unity of thought in the midst of the most striking diversities. The later additions are crude and harsh as compared with the more ancient—a fact which is partly due to the mellowing effect of age, and partly also

to the admission of strange models. In our speech, as well as in our architecture, we are now sated with the classic element, and we are turning our eyes back with curiosity and interest to what was in use before the revival of letters, and before the renaissance of classic art.

Except that the verbs require not their hundreds, but their thousands of years, to be told off when we take count of their development, we might offer this as a fitting similitude. They are indeed variously featured, and bearing the characters of widely differing ages, and they are united only in a oneness of purpose; and by reason of these characters I have used the collective expression which is at the head of this chapter, and designated them as The Verbal Group.

## CHAPTER VII.

### · THE NOUN-GROUP.

**313.** WE are now come to the backbone of our subject. The relation of the verb to the noun may be figured not unaptly by calling the verb the headpiece, and the noun the backbone.

When we say the noun, we mean a group of words which comprise no less than the whole essential presentives of the language. In grammars they are ordinarily divided into three groups, the substantive, the adjective, and the adverb. We call these the presentives, and they will be found precisely co-extensive with that term. It is true that many verbs are presentive, and this may seem a difficulty. More verbs are presentive than are not. But it is no part of the quality of a verb to be presentive; if it is presentive, that circumstance is a mere accident of its material condition. On the other hand all the words which we shall include in the noun-group are essentially presentive, and they constitute the store of presentive words of the language.

When verbs are presentive, they are so precisely in proportion to the amount of nounal stuff that is mixed up in their constitution. For we must regard the verbs—always excepting the symbolic verbs, that is, verbs which in whole or in part have shed their old nounal coat—simply as nouns raised to an official position in the mechanism of the sentence, and qualified for their office by receiving a predicative power.

314. As the verb is most retentive of antiquity, and as it therefore offers the best point of comparison with other languages of the same Gothic stock, so, on the side of the noun we may say that it exhibits best the stratification of the language. By which is meant, that the traces of the successive influences which have passed over the national mind have left on the noun a continuous series of deposits, and that it is here we can most plainly read off the history and experiences of the individual language. The verb will tell us more of comparative philology; but the noun will tell more of the particular philology of the English language.

Under the title then of the Noun-Group three parts of speech are included—the Substantive, the Adjective, and the Adverb. For all these are in fact nouns under different aspects.

This chapter will consist of three sections corresponding to these three parts of speech.

## I. OF THE SUBSTANTIVE.

315. The chief forms are derived from the 'Saxon, the French, the Latin, and the Greek languages. The Saxon forms are generally to be found extant in one or more of the cognate dialects, such as the Icelandic, the Dutch, the German, the Danish, the Swedish; but substantives will not be found to unite the languages in one consent so often as the strong verbs.

### *Saxon Forms.*

The oldest group consists of short words, mostly found in the cognate dialects, which have no distinguishable suffix or formative attached to them, or whose formative is now



obscured by deformation. The bulk of this class is monosyllabic, not so much by origin as by condensation. Thus *lord* was in Saxon *hlaf-ord*, and *soul* was *sawul*. Sometimes both long and short forms are preserved, as *wagon* and *wain*.

Examples :—*ash, awe, badge, bear, bed, bee, bier, bliss, boat, borough, bread, breast, bride, buck, calf, chin, cloth, corn, cow, craft, day, deal, deed, deer, doom, door, down* (on a peach), *drink, drone, ear, earth, east, edge, elm, eye, fat* (vessel), *field, fish, flesh, flood, fly, foe, fold, foot, frog, frost, furze, ghost, goat, God, goose, glass, gnat, ground, guest, hand, harp, head, heap, heart, herd, hill, hood, hoof, horse, hound, house, ice, ivy, keel, knave, knee, knight, knot, lamb, land, laugh, leaf, Lent, life, lord, lore, louse, love, lust, man, mark, meed, mist, mood, moon, mouse, mouth, neat* (cattle), *need, nest, net, north, nose, oak, oath, ox, path, pith, rake, ram, rest, rick, rind, ring, roof, rope, salve, sap, scar, sea, seal* (phoca), *seed, shame, share, sheaf, shears, sheep, shield, ship, shire, shoe, sin, skin, skull, smith, son, song, sough, soul, south, speed, staff, stall, star, steer, stone, stock, stow, stream, sun, swine, sword, thief, thing, tide, tongue, tooth, town, tree, wain, way, wear, well, west, wether, whale, wheel, whelp, while, wife, will, wind, wold, wolf, womb, wood, word, world, worm, yard, year, yoke.*

These we may regard as Simple words, that is to say, words in which we cannot see more than one element unless we mount higher than the bier of the present treatise. From these we pass on to others in which we begin to recognise formative traces, that is, something of terminations as distinct from the body of the words.

316. The first group consists of those in which the termination is a mere letter or syllable of which we can give no further account; but only notice the obscure appearance of a formative value.

Forms in -L:—*awl, bubble, bushel, churl, cradle, earl, evil, fowl, girdle, kirtle, nail, sail, segel, settle a bench, sickle, skittle, snaffle, snail, snegel, soul, shovel, spittle, thimble, tile.*

Forms in -M:—*arm, barm, beam, bosam, fathom, helm, qualm, seam.*

Forms in -N:—*beacon, brain, brægen, burden, chicken, heaven, maiden, main* A.S. *mægen, strength, rain, raven, steven* Chaucer, *thane* A.S. *þegen, token, wagon, weapon, welkin* A.S. *wolcen.*

Forms in R:—*acre* A.S. *æcer, brother, cock-chaffer, daughter, father, feather, finger, leather, liver, mother, sister, stair* stæger, *summer, tear, thunder, timber, water, winter, wonder.*

317. Forms in T:—*bight, blight, fight, gift, height, light, might, right, sight, thought, wight, yeast.*

*bight.*

'Cross-examination resumed.—"I got the bight of the handkerchief behind the boy's head, and laid hold of the two corners of it. All this time prisoner was trying, as well as I, to get the boy in. I was lying down and so was prisoner, reaching across the water."'

Forms in TH:—*breadth, growth, length, lewth* Devon, *ruth, spilth* Shakspeare, *stealth, strength, troth, truth, width.*

Here also belongs *math* in Tennyson's 'after-math,' from the verb to *mow*.

*Faith* is one of these, which was formed upon the French *foi*, anglicised *fey*. These two words went on for a long time together, with a tolerably clear distinction of sense. *Fey* meant religious belief, creed, as in the exclamation *By my fey!* while *faith* signified the moral virtue of loyalty or fidelity: and this signification it still bears in the phrase *in good faith*.

318. In -ing; as *king* A.S. *cyning, shilling*, and the Saxon execrative *nothing*: and also those which in Saxon end in -ung, as *blessing* *bletsung*.

*twinkling.*

'In a moment, in the twykelynge of an y3c.'—Wiclif, 1 Cor. xv. 52.

This -ING was the formative of the Saxon patronymic, as 'Ælfred Æþelwulfing', Alfred the son of Æthelwulf; 'Æþelwulf wæs Ecgbryhting,' Æthelwulf was son of Ecgbryht.

The old Saxon title *Æþeling*, for the Crown Prince, was thus formed, as it were the son of the Æþel or Estate. About the year 1300, Robert of Gloucester considered this word as needing an explanation:—

'Ac þe gode tryw men of þe lond wolde abbe ymade kyng  
þe kunde eyr, þe 3onge chyld, Edgar Aþelyng.  
Wo so were next kyng by kunde, me clupeþ hym Athelyng.  
Þervor me clupede hym so, vor by kunde he was next kyng.'

Ed. Hearne, i. 354.

TRANSLATION.—*But the good true men of the land would have made king the natural heir, the young Chyld, Edgar Atheling. Whoso were next king by birthright, men call him Atheling: therefore men called him so, for by birth he was next king.*

In some of these instances we see -ing added to words ending in *l*; and as this repeatedly happened, there arose from the habitual association of this termination with that letter a new and distinct formative in -ling, as *darling*, *firstling*, *gosling*, *hireling*, *nestling*, *stripling*, *starveling*, *underling*.

*comlyng.*

'Hyt semeþ a gret wondur hou3 Englysch þat ys þe burþ-tonge of Englyschemen 7 here oune longage 7 tonge ys so dyvers of soon in þis ylond, 7 the longage of Normandy ys comlyng of anoþer lond, 7 haþ on manere soon among al men þat spekeþ hyt ary3t in Engelonde.'—John Trevisa, *Higden's Polychronicon*, A.D. 1387.

*weakling.*

'His baptisme was hastned to prevent his death, all looking on him as a weakling, which would post to the grave.'—Thomas Fuller, *Franciscus Junius* in 'Abel Redivivus,' 1651.

Even this secondary formative is of high antiquity, and its

standing in our language is only imperfectly indicated by the observation that it is in German as in English far more frequent than its primary in *-ing*. The word *silverling*, in Isaiah vii. 23, is after Luther's *Silberling*.

**319.** In *-ere*, *bæcere*, baker; and *boceras*, for the Scribes in the Gospels, literally *bookers*. From this source we have also *ale-conner*, *binder*, *dealer*, *ditcher*, *fiddler*, *fisher*, *fowler*, *grinder*, *harper*, *hater*, *listener*, *miller*, *-monger*, *runner*, *skipper*, *walker*, *Webber*.

The above terminations are of very high antiquity, and we can give no account of them as separate and independent words. It is otherwise with those of the next group, *-ness*, *-dom*, *-hood*, *-lock*, *-rick*, *-red*, *-ship*. We know the meaning which each of them had in its separate state.

**320.** *-ness* is the only exception, if indeed it is one. There is a well-known word of this form which means a projection, promontory, point of termination, headland. Thus in *Beowulf* 444, the forelands at sea are called *sæ-næssas*, or sea-nesses; and many a headland on our coast has still Ness attached to it, or some variety of that word: e.g. Denge Ness, Caithness, Foulness, Furness, The Naze, Nash Point.

It is hardly possible to imagine a bolder figure, or one more apt to convey the idea of abstraction, than that which presents the concrete as elongated to a tapering point. And I apprehend that some such a conception is evidenced by the wide acceptance of this termination. Its mechanical origin indeed seems to have been analogous to that of *-ling*. In the Mæso-Gothic Lord's Prayer (15) we see *thiudin-assus*, and here the formative is *assus*. The frequency of a similar contact with *n* seems first to have made *ness* a formative; but its attraction proved so powerful that it everywhere superseded the pure form. Such a diversion intimates that

the new form approved itself to the mind of the speakers, and brought more satisfaction than the old. Grimm bewails this seduction of the speech-genius from the true path; but he admits that the error, as he calls it, pervades the earliest Old High German remains. The avidity of this acceptance I explain by reference to Ness's headland. That particular explanation may or may not be the real one; but these transitions do not take place without some such mental connivance, though the mind be little conscious of its part.

This formative is unknown in the Scandinavian languages.

Examples :—*carelessness, consciousness, darkness, goodness, heaviness, indebtedness, meanness, peaceableness, readiness, suppleness, usefulness, weariness, wilderness, wiliness.*

Illustrations :—

*highmindedness, dejectedness, contentedness.*

'He that cannot abound without pride and highmindedness, will not want without too much dejectedness . . . . Frame a sufficiency out of contentedness.'—Richard Sibbes, *Soul's Conflict*, ch. x.

*composedness.*

'Spiritual composedness and sabbath of spirit.'—Id.

*everlastingness.*

'But felt through all this fleshly dress,  
Bright shoots of everlastingness.'

Henry Vaughan (1621–1695), *The Retreat*.

*darknesses.*

'Glorious in His darknesses.'—Jeremy Taylor, *Life of Christ*, vol. ii. p. 59; Heber's ed.

*carelessness.*

'The sole explanation of incongruities in Shakespeare is to be found, I believe, in that sublime carelessness which is characteristic of the genius of this wonderful man.'—Sir Henry Holland, *Recollections of Past Life*, ch. ix.

321. There has been a period since the seventeenth

century in which this formative has been less in vogue, whilst the Latin *-ation* has prevailed; but the emulation between rival forms is often smoothed into co-operation, in a language that loves the breadth of duplicate expression. Thus we see *-ness* and *-ation* yoked amicably together, as—

‘More studious of unity and concord than of innovations and new-fangledness.’—Common Prayer, *Of Ceremonies*.

There is however a certain power of humour which is peculiar to *-ness* :—

‘What an unusual share of *somethingness* in his whole appearance!’—Oliver Goldsmith, *Citizen of the World*, Letter xiv.

Of late years *-ness* has been much revived, and has supplied some new words, as *indebtedness*. Indeed the form has become a modern favourite, and many a new turn of speech has been made with it. In the bold novelty of some of them we may almost trace a spirit of rebellion against conventionality.

*inwardness.*

‘Nor Nature fails my walks to bless  
With all her golden inwardness.’ James Russell Lowell.

*hopefulness, belieffulness.*

‘And there is a hopefulness and a belieffulness, so to say, on your side, which is a great compensation.’—A. H. Clough to R. W. Emerson, 1853.

*missionariness.*

‘It is, I think, alarming—peculiarly at this time, when the female ink-bottles are perpetually impressing upon us woman’s particular worth and general missionariness—to see that the dress of women is daily more and more unfitting them for any mission or usefulness at all.’—Florence Nightingale, *Notes on Nursing*.

*naturalness.*

‘The unaffected country naturalness of the lad.’—*Doctor Johns*, by I. K. Marvel, 1866.

*northness.*

Long lines of cackling geese were sailing far overhead, winging their way to some more remote point of northness.’—Dr. Hayes, *Open Polar Sea*, ch. xxxv.

322. As a consequence of its revived popularity, it is now frequently substituted for French or Latin terminations of like significance, and this even in words of Romanesque material. A lady asked me why the author wrote *effeminateness* and not *effeminacy* in the following passage.

'1812, June 17th. At four o'clock dined in the Hall with De Quincey, who was very civil to me, and cordially invited me to visit his cottage in Cumberland. Like myself, he is an enthusiast for Wordsworth. His person is small, his complexion fair, and his air and manner are those of a sickly and enfeebled man. From this circumstance his sensibility, which I have no doubt is genuine, is in danger of being mistaken for effeminateness.'—Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, vol. i. p. 391.

Indeed *-cy* and *-ness* are good equivalents, and hence they are often seen coupled or opposed, as *decency* and *cleanliness*.

'Decency must have been difficult in such a place, and cleanliness impossible.'—James Anthony Froude, *History of England*, August, 1567.

323. The collective or abstract *-dom* is found in all the dialects except the Mæso-Gothic. It seems to have originally meant distinction, dignity, grandeur, and so to have been chosen to express the great whole of anything. As a separate word it became *doom*, meaning authority and judgment.

Examples:—*Christendom*, *heathendom*, *kingdom*, *martyrdom*, *serfdom*, *thralldom*, *wisdom*. Altered form:—*halidam* and *halidame*.

The Germans make a variety of words with this formative, as *Bisþum*, bishopdom; *Reichthum*, richdom.

This form has recovered a new activity of late years, and it is now highly prolific. We meet with such new forms as *beadledom*, *Saxondom*, *scoundreldom*, *rascaldom*.

#### *Saxondom.*

'How much more two nations, which, as I said, are but one nation; knit in a thousand ways by nature and practical intercourse; indivisible brother elements of the same great Saxondom, to which in all honorable ways be long life!'—Thomas Carlyle, in Forster's *Life of Dickens*, ch. xx.

*rascaldom.*

'I doubt very much indeed whether the honesty of the country has been improved by the substitution so generally of mental education for industrial; and the "three R's," if no industrial training has gone along with them, are apt, as Miss Nightingale observes, to produce a fourth R—of rascaldom.'—J. A. Froude, at St. Andrew's, March, 1869.

The value of the formative has much altered in the case of *Christendom*. This word is now used to signify the geographical area which is peopled by Christians; but in the early use it meant just what we now mean by *Christianity*, the profession and condition of Christianity.

It is early days to find the modern sense in Chaucer—

'And ther to hadde he ryden no man ferre,  
As wel in cristendom as hethenesse,' *Prologue*, 49;

and rather belated to find the elder sense in Shakspeare. In the graphic dialogue about the new fashions fresh from France, the lord chamberlain says—

'Their cloathes are after such a Pagan cut too't,  
That sure th'haue worne out christendome.'

*Henry VIII*, i. 3. 15.

**324.** Nouns in *-red* are, and always were, but few. The formative answers to the German *rath* in *Heirath*, marriage, originally meaning design, but in the formative having only the sense of condition. It seems to be the same as the final syllable in the proper names *Ælfred*, *Eadred*, *Æbelred*. Of this formation I can only produce two words that are still in current use, unless we may place *hundred* here.

Examples:—*kindred*, *hatred*. 'a 'rɛd'

In the fourteenth century we meet with

*gossipred.*

'But the enmity between the "English by blood" and "English by birth" still went on, and the former married with the Irish, adopted their language, laws, and dress, and became bound to them also by "gossipred" and "fosterage."'—W. Longman, *Edward the Third*, vol. ii. p. 15.



The words of this formation seem to be specially adapted for the expression of human relationships, whether natural, moral, or social. This is the case with the three already instanced, as well as with others belonging to the Saxon stage of the language. We must not omit the word *neighbourhood*, which is one of these terms of social relationship, and which was originally 'neighbourred,' as we find it far into the transition period.

'Mon sulðe his elmesse þenne he heo gefeð swulche monne ðe he for some wernen ne mei for negeburrede.'—*Old English Homilies*, p. 137.

'Man sells his alms when he giveth it to such a man as he for very shame cannot warn off [= decline giving to] by reason of the ties of neighbourbood.'

**325. -lock, -ledge:** These are very few now, and were not numerous in Saxon, where the termination was in the form *-lac*; as *brydlac*, marriage; *guðlac*, battle; *reaf lac*, spoil; *scinlac*, sorcery. The word *lac* here is an old word for play, and still exists locally in *lake-fellow* for play-fellow. To *lake* is common in Cumberland and Westmoreland in the sense of 'to play.' It is not generally known, I believe,—it certainly was not known to me until I learnt it by a friendly annotation on this sheet,—that when tourists to the Lakes are called *lakers*, the natives imply the double meaning of Lake-admirers and idlers<sup>1</sup>.

Examples:—*wedlock*; and in an altered form, *knowledge*.

*Guthlac* was not only a word for *battle*, but was also a man's name, to wit, of the Hermit of Croyland. Also *warlock* may be regarded as one of this class, at least by assimilation. It is probably a modification of the Saxon *wær-loga*, which Grein eloquently translates *veritatis infi-*

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<sup>1</sup> This is disallowed by one of my obliging correspondents, but well attested by another: and as both are authorities, I conclude that such a usage has been a partial one.

*tiator*, and which was applicable to almost any sort of intelligent being that was perfidious, and under a ban, and beyond the pale of humanity.

**326. -hood** was an independent substantive in Saxon literature, in the form of *hād*. This word signified office, degree, faculty, quality. Thus, while the power and jurisdiction of a bishop was called 'biscopdom' and 'biscopric,' the sacred function which is bestowed in consecration was called *biscopphād*. The verb for ordaining or consecrating was one which signified the bestowal of *hād*, viz. 'hadian.'

Examples :—*boyhood, brotherhood, childhood, hardihood, likelihood, maidenhood, manhood, sisterhood, widowhood.*

An altered form is *-head*, as in *Godhead*, an alteration which makes it difficult for many to see that it is the analogue of *manhood*, and as if *God-hood*. In Chaucer it takes the form of *-hode* or *-hede*; as *chapmanhode* (*Man of Lawes Tale*, stanza 2); *goodelyhede* (*Blaunche* 829). In Spenser it is *hed* or *-hedd*, as in his description of a comet :—

*dreryhedd.*

'All as a blazing starre doth farre outcast  
His hearie beames, and flaming lockes dispredd,  
At sight whereof the people stand aghast;  
But the sage wisard telles, as he has redd,  
That it importunes death and dolefull dreryhedd.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. i. 16.

*bountihed.*

'She seemed a woman of great bountihed.'

Id. iii. i. 41.

The word *livelihood* merits notice by itself. It has been assimilated to this class by the influence of such forms as *likelihood*. The original Saxon word was *lif-ladu* (*vitae cursus*), the course or leading of life. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was written *liflode*, and was the

commonest word for 'living' in the sense of means of life, where we should now use the (unhistorical) form *livelihood*.

This formative is represented in German by *-heit*, as *ed̥t*, genuine; *Ge̥t̥heit*, genuineness.

**327. -ship** is from the old verb *SCAPAN*, to shape; and indeed it is the mere addition of the general idea of shape on to the noun of which it becomes the formative abstract. It corresponds to the German *-schaft*, as *Ge̥fell*, companion; *Ge̥fellschaft*, society.

Examples : — *doctorship*, *fellowship*, *friendship*, *lordship*, *ladyship*, *ownership*, *proctorship*, *trusteeship*, *workmanship*, *worship* (= worth-ship).

Illustrations :—

'The proctorship and the doctorship.'—Clarendon, *History*, i. § 189.

'Trusteeship has been converted into ownership.'—Edward Hawkins, D.D., *Our Debts to Cæsar and to God*, 1868.

The Dutch form is *-schap*, as in *Landschap*, Germ *Land-schaft*—a word which we have borrowed from the Dutch artists, and which we retain in the form of *landscape*.

**328.** The form *-ric* is an old word for rule, sway, dominion, jurisdiction. We have but one word left with this formative, viz. *bishopric*. There used to be others, as *cyneric*, like the German *Königreich*, which we now call 'kingdom.' They would not regard the last syllable in this word as a formative, but as an independent substantive *Reich*, and they would regard *Königreich* as a compound. We cannot so regard *bishopric*, simply because we have lost *ric* as a distinct substantive; but when the word *bishopric* was first made, it was made as a compound.

The same is true of all this group of substantives in *-dom*, *-had*, *-red*, *-ship*, that they were originally started as compounds; but the latter syllable having lost its inde-

pendent hold on the speech, it has come to be regarded as a mere formative attached to the body of the word by flexional symphytism.

At the end of the Saxon list it seems most natural to mention a few words which make their appearance for the first time with the modern English language, and of which the origin is obscure. Such are *boy*, *girl*, *pig*, *dog*. Chaucer has—

*boy.*

‘A *li*er boy was non in Engelande.’

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, 6904.

### *French Forms.*

**329.** The next forms were those which we obtained from the French in the period when our language was in a state of pupillage. Some of our French substantives are hard to classify, because their formatives are obliterated; as *page*, from the Latin *pagina*; *grace* from *gratia*; *aunt*, Old French *ante*, from *amita*.

Not unfrequently the French nouns which came into English had been previously borrowed from the Franks, or some other race of Gothic stock. Thus *guardian* which occurs in every chief language of Europe, is from an Old High Dutch word, and corresponds to the last syllable in the Saxon name *Edward*. In our form *warden*, we cast off the French guise of the first syllable, but retained the Romanesque termination, Latin *-ianus*, French *-ien*. The French *garden* is radically one with the English *yard*; the French *range* with the English *rank*: and so in many other instances.

**330.** We will begin the list with a form which is interesting, although it has but a feeble hold on the modern

language and never was much more than a legal technicality.

**-er** is a French infinitive become substantive. We are familiar with the French infinitive in such a law phrase as 'oyer and terminer'; but the following are become substantives—*attainder, demurrer, disclaimer, rejoinder, remainder, user, waiver*.

*user.*

'Several of the commons proposed to be enclosed are in the neighbourhood of large towns, and one of them, embracing the Lizard Point and Kynance Cove in Cornwall, comprising scenery of unusual beauty. The practical effect of the enclosures would be to prevent that public user of the commons which has hitherto existed, without making anything like an adequate reservation in lieu of it.—August 9, 1870.

*waiver.*

'Therefore the British Commissioners regarded them as waived. They recorded the waiver, and informed the Government of it at the time. . . . And because the American Commissioners did not formally present them a second time, he concluded that they were waived, and he telegraphed to his Government of the waiver.'—*The Standard*, June 6, 1872.

**331.** Among the most thoroughly domesticated of the French forms are those

In **-ry** or **-ery** (French *-erie*, as in *Jacquerie, gendarmerie*); e. g. *cavalry, chapelry, deanery, fishery, imagery, Jewry, mockery, piggery, poetry, pottery, poultry, rookery, sorcery, spicery, swannery, trumpery* (French *tromperie*), *witchery*.

*mockeries.*

'I think we are not wholly brain,  
Magnetic mockeries.'—*In Memoriam*, cxix.

*Shrubbery* is from the old homely word *scrub* in the sense which it bears in 'Wormwood Scrubs,' and in the following quotation :

'It [the barony of Farney] was then a wild and almost unenclosed plain, and consisted chiefly of coarse pasturage interspersed with low alder scrub.'—W. Steuart Trench, *Realities of Irish Life*, p. 66.

From this French form the Germans have borrowed their

*erei*, as *Juristerei*, jurisprudence. *Poetria* was a mediæval Latin word which has long ago disappeared from French; and *poetry* is now distinctively an English word. As early as 1611, *poeterie* is given in Cotgrave's French Dictionary as 'an old word.'

Another distinctive word, of our own stamping, is *fairy*. This was originally the collective noun from the French *fée*, as those little folk are still called across the Channel, but we gradually passed from such expressions as *land of faerie* and *queene of faerie*, to make *fairies* the modern substitute for the native title of *elves*.

332. In *-son*, *-shion*, or *-som*, after the French from the Latin nouns in *-tio*, *-tionis*. The termination *-son* represents the Latin accusative case. Thus the French *raison* answers to the Latin *rationem*.

Examples:—*advowson*, advocatationem; *arson*; *benison*, benedictionem; *comparison*, comparationem; *fashion*, factionem; *garrison*, Fr. garnison; *lesson*, lectionem; *malison*, maledictionem; *orison*, orationem; *poison*, potionem; *ransom*, renditionem; *reason*; *season*, sationem; *treason*, traditionem; *venison*, venationem.

The form *-sion* must also be placed here, after the French from the Latin *-sionem*; as *mansion*, *passion*, *pension*.

*Foison* is an interesting word of this class. It is now out of use, but it occurs in Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakspeare. It signified abundance, copiousness; and represented *fusi-onem* the accusative of *fusio*, which was used in a sense something like our modern Latin word 'profusion.' The modern Italian has the substantive *fusione*. It is a very frequent word in Froissart, as *grand' foison de gent*, a great multitude of people. The following passage, from a fifteenth-century description of the hospitality of a Vavasour, exemplifies the use of this word.

"Sirs," seide the yonge man, "ye be welcome, and ledde hem in to the middill of the Court, and thei a-light of there horse, and ther were I-nowe<sup>1</sup> that ledde hem to stable, and yaf hem hey and otes, ffor the place was well stuffed; and a squyer hem ledde in to a feire halle be the grounde hem for to vn-arme, and the Vavasour and his wif, and his foure sones that he hadde, and his tweyne doughtres dide a-rise, and light vp torches and other lightes ther-ynne, and sette water to the fier, and waissshed there visages and there handes, and after hem dried on feire towelles and white, and than brought eche of hem a mantell, and the Vavasour made cover the tables, and sette on brede and wyn grete foyson, and venyson and salt flessch grete plente; and the knyghtes sat down and ete and dranke as thei that ther-to haue great nede," &c.—*Merlin*, Early English Text Society, p. 517.

**333. In -ment.** From the Latin *-mentum*, as *frumentum*, *jumentum*. In the early time this form figured much more largely in French than in English. For example, we have not and never had in English the two Latin words now quoted. But the French have both *froment* and *jument*. We may add, that words of this termination were most numerous with us during the period when the French influence was most dominant, and that since that period many of them have grown obsolete.

Examples:—*advancement*, *amendment*, *battlement*, *cement*, *chastisement*, *commandment*, *detriment*, *element*, *enchantment*, *firmament*, *habiliment*, *instrument*, *judgment*, *moment*, *ornament*, *parlement*, *pavement*, *payment*, *regiment*, *sacrament*, *savement*, *sentiment*, *tenement*, *testament*, *torment*, *tournament*, *vestment*.

Illustrations:—

*sentement* = taste, flavour.

'And other Trees there ben also, that beren Wyn of noble sentement.'—*Maundevile*, p. 189.

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<sup>1</sup> *I-nowe* = enough. The word is just so pronounced to this day in Devonshire; not however with the *eye*-sound of *I*. This prefix represents the Saxon *ge* in *genob*. The odd tendency to make the *ge* into a capital *I* is not without its importance. By the fidelity of the Early English Text Society to these little matters, their publications have a greater philological value. For the kind of importance that may attach to this capital *I*, see the case of '*I wis*' above, at 290.

*firmament, compassement.*

'For the partie of the Firmament schewethe in o contree, that schewethe not in another contree. And men may well preven by experience and sotyle compassement of Wytt that . . . men myghte go be schippe alle aboute the world.'—Maundevile, p. 180.

In the following quotation, *intendiment* means 'knowledge,' from the French *entendre*, to understand.

'Into the woods, thenceforth in haste shee went,  
To seeke for herbes that mote him remedy;  
For shee of herbes had great intendiment.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 5. 32.

A great word of the present day is *improvement*.

'It is true that much was done for the place from outside. Much of what is called sanitary improvement was accomplished and is still effective. But sanitary improvements do not save souls.'—Harry Jones, *Life in the World*, 1865.

A word which is still more prominent in our times, and which may be called one of the words of the period, is *development*. This is a modernism with us, and its use cannot be traced back much more than a century, while its celebrity is still more recent. It is a French word, and is of considerable antiquity in that language. The following from Randle Cotgrave (1611) is illustrative:—

'Desvelopé : m. eé : f. *Unwrapped, unfoulden ; opened, undone ; displaid, spread abroad ; also, cleered.*

Desvelopement : m. *An unwrapping, unfoulding ; undoing, opening ; manifesting, displaying, spreading open.*

Desveloper. *To unwrap, unfould ; vndoe, open, shew forth ; display, spread abroad ; rid, unpester, cleere.'*

*encroachment.*

'One of the most noticeable facts in literature is the gradual encroachment of prose upon poetry—a change which has been going on from the first, and of which evidently we do not yet see the end.'—John Conington, *The Academical Study of Latin*.

In some modern words it seems to be rather an English than a French form; thus we have made the French



*embarras* into the English *embarrassment*. The revived interest in older formatives which marks our time, has brought this also into fresh notice, and has caused its word-painting power of picturesqueness to be appreciated. In a recent story, the heroine has a 'face full of dimplements.'

334. In *-et*. A French diminutive form. Examples:—*cygnet, facet, floweret, hatchet, islet, junket, latchet, pocket, rivulet, signet, ticket, trumpet, turret*.

*Lynchet* is a local word of Saxon origin which has taken this French facing. In the neighbourhood of Winchester and elsewhere along the chalk hills, it signifies bank, terrace; and it has been applied to those ledges which have the appearance of raised beaches. It is the old Saxon word *hlinc*, frequently used in Saxon charters for a boundary embankment, artificial or natural. So it gets attached to frontier wastes, as in the case of the Links of St. Andrews, Malvern Link. In Cooper's *Provincialisms of Sussex*, a *link* is defined to be 'A green or wooded bank always on the side of a hill between two pieces of cultivated land.' In Jennings's *Glossary of the West of England*, *linch* is defined as 'A ledge; a rectangular projection,' and here we have the form which was frenchified into *lynchet*.

And *-ette*. Examples:—*etiquette, marionette, mignonette, palette, rosette*.

We have adopted *etiquette* a second time. Our first reception of it has degenerated into *ticket*, which comes under the form last mentioned.

And *-let*. Examples:—*armlet, bracelet, branchlet, kinglet, ringlet, troutlet*.

*branchlet*.

'I have found it necessary to make a distinction between branches and branchlets, understanding by the latter term the lateral shoots which are produced in the same season as those from which they spring.'—John Lindley, *A Monograph of Roses* (1820), p. xxi.

*islet, ringlet.*

‘Nor for yon river islet wild  
Beneath the willow spray,  
Where, like the ringlets of a child,  
Thou weav’st thy circle gay;—’

John Keble, *Christian Year*, Tuesday in Easter Week.

335. In **-age**; as *average, baggage, bondage, carriage, cottage, damage, espionage, language, lineage, marriage, message, passage, poundage, tonnage, vicarage, village, voyage.*

These words had for the most part an abstract meaning in their origin, and they have often grown more concrete by use. The word *cottage*, as commonly understood, is concrete, but there was an older and more abstract use, according to which it signified an inferior kind of tenure, a use in which it may be classed with such words as *burgage, soccage*. The following is from a manuscript of the seventeenth century.

‘*The definition of an Esquire and the severall sortes of them according to the Custome and Vsage of England.*

An Esquire called in latine Armiger, Scutifer, et homo ad arma is he that in times past was Costrell to a Knight, the bearer of his sheild and helme, a faithfull companion and associate to him in the Warrs, serving on horsebacke, whereof every knight had twoe at the least attendance upon him, in respect of the fee, For they held their land of the Knight by Cottage as the Knight held his of the King by Knight service.’—*Ashmole MS.* 837, art. viii. fol. 162.

A beautiful use of the word *personage*, in the sense of personal appearance, occurs in *The Faery Queene*, iii. 2. 26:—

‘The Damzell wel did vew his Personage.’

*Carriage* now signifies a vehicle for carrying; but in the Bible of 1611 it occurs eight times as the collective for things carried, *impedimenta*. In Numbers iv. 24 it is a marginal reading for ‘burdens,’ which is in the text. In Acts xxi. 15, ‘We tooke vp our cariages,’ is rendered by Cranmer

(1539) 'we toke vp oure burthenes,' and in the Geneva version (1557) 'we trussed up our fardeles.'

*Verbiage* signifies a superfluity of words, or the excess of words over meaning in a discourse, or more generally, words without point. I asked a friend whether his speech had been fairly reported: 'Well,' said he, 'they have given the verbiage of what I said pretty faithfully.'

336. Next to *-age* we naturally come to the form *-ager*, as in the French *passager*, *messenger*, which has been altered in English to the form *-enger*, as *passenger*, *messenger*. Above, 71, we find *messenger* in an English letter of the year 1402. With these must be classed the words in *-inger*, as *harbinger*, *porringer*, *pollinger*, *wharfinger*. *Wallinger* is the name of a class of labourers in the salt-works at Nantwich, and it may perhaps be connected with Saxon *weallan* to boil. *Muringer* is the title of the officers who are charged with the repairs of the walls at Chester, and it may be seen on a tablet over an archway near the Water Tower<sup>1</sup>.

In the fourteenth century there was a public officer known as the King's *aulneger*, who was a sort of inspector of the measuring of all cloths offered for sale, and his title was derived from the French *aulne*, an ell; *aulnage*, measuring with the ell-measure<sup>2</sup>.

337. This seems to be the proper place for a word whose origin has been variously explained. A very great mediæval word was *danger*, both in French and English. The reader of our early literature should not too readily assume that he has understood any passage in which this word occurs. At present the word is hardly to be distinguished from hazard,

<sup>1</sup> For these local particulars in correction of my first edition, I am indebted to Miss Jackson, a lady from whom there is reason to expect a work of original research on the dialects of Shropshire.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Times of Edward III*, by William Longman, vol. i. p. 340; from 25 Edw. III, Stat. 3.

peril, risk, liability, exposure. A modern reader might almost assume that 'Les dangers des bois', could mean nothing else than 'The perils of the woods.' But it is thus defined by Cotgrave (1611):—'*The amerçiements, and confiscations adiudged vnto the King by the officers of woods, and forrests.*'

In the early poems of gallantry, which were the staple of belles lettres in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and of which the ripest example is the *Romaunt of the Rose*, the term *Danger* is used constantly for the name of one of the allegorical personages. This name represents that person who, whether as father or husband or lover, has some superior right or title in the heroine of the moment. It resulted from the fundamental idea of these pieces, that such a person must be made odious, and accordingly he appears as a churl, a skulk, a spy, &c. Thus, in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, when the prospects of the rose-hunter are most flattering, we read, line 3015 :—

'But than a chorle, foul him betide,  
Beside the roses gan him hide,  
To keepe the roses of that rosere,  
Of whom the name was DAUNGERE :  
This chorle was hid there in the greves,  
Covered with grasse and with leues,  
To spie and take whom that he fond  
Unto that roser put an hond.'

It seems that the word must be derived from *Dominus*, which is represented by *Dan*-, as in 'Dan Chaucer,' and accordingly it fitly expressed seigneurial rights, as in the definition of Cotgrave: and hence too its aptness in the phraseology of escheats and forfeitures; as where Mr. Froude quotes an entry in the Records,—

'That on the 12th of July, 1568, the Earl of Desmond—acknowledging himself in danger to her Highness for the forfeiture of £20,000 by his securities—relinquished into her Majesty's hands all his lands, tenements, houses, castles, signeries, all he stood possessed of, to receive back what her Majesty would please to allow him, &c.—*History of England*, vol. x. p. 487.

Chaucer used the adjective as equivalent to haughty or supercilious :—

'I wol yow telle a litel thing in prose,  
That oughte like yow, as I suppose,  
Or elles certes ye be to daungerous.'

*Prolog to Melibeus.*

In *The Merchant of Venice*, iv. 1, 'You stand within his danger, do you not?' is equivalent to 'You are in his power, are you not?' and it is by the introduction of this word *danger* that the key-note is struck of that piece which is to follow, on the quality of mercy. Power and Mercy are natural correlatives. This moral truth is worked into the habits of our phraseology; for it is much the same thing with us now to say that one is in another's power, or to say that he is at his mercy. The latter way of speaking was indeed first invented as a euphemism upon the former, but it has become equally harsh, perhaps rather the harsher of the two. One example this among thousands, that whatever may be the temporary complicity of language in dissimulation, no trick of words will ever compel it permanently to act as a cloak of hypocrisy. It has a way of recovering its honesty by the process of an open confession. We may indeed regret the degradation of noble expressions; but this effect, which is at first sight so disagreeable, is found to be the condition of preserving language from moral corruption.

This group has so marked a character that it seemed to deserve a place by itself, although it belongs in strictness to the next class in virtue of its final termination.

**338.** In *-er*, *-ier*, from the French *-er* and *-ier*. Of this suffix *-ier*, it is said by M. Auguste Brachet, in his *Grammaire Historique*, p. 276<sup>1</sup>, that it is 'perhaps the most

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<sup>1</sup> At p. 184 of Mr. Kitchin's Translation, in the Clarendon Press Series, 1869.

productive' of all the French nounal forms. For in the first place, it is the constant form for expressing a man's trade. The Saxon *-ere* had a like value, but it was swallowed up in the greater volume of this French form.

Examples :—*butcher, Fletcher, gardener, grocer, vintner*. Already in the Prologue we have four of them in two lines :—

‘An Haberdasshere and a Carpenter,  
A Webbe, a Dyere, and a Tapycer.’

Here the only term which is not in *-er*, is, oddly enough a curt form of the Saxon *webbere*, weaver.

In Bristol there is (or was) a street called Tucker Street, in which stood the Hall of the Weavers' Guild, till it was destroyed in making a new road to the railway station. This street is called in mediæval deeds *Vicus Fullonum*, and the present name is to the same effect. For the word Tucker (anciently *Toukere*) is equivalent to *clothier*. In German the common word for cloth is *Tuch*.

**339.** Sometimes *-er* represents the French *-eur*. Thus *doer*, with its Saxon base, has no Saxon antecedent as to its formative, but answers to the French *fauteur*.

*escaper*.

‘And Iehu said, If it be your minds, then let no escaper goe.’—*2 Kings* ix. 15, margin.

The word *comer* took the place of a Saxon *cuma*, and though its range was much narrowed by our adoption of the French *stranger*, yet it never quite died out. It occurs once in the Bible of 1611, twice in the plays of Shakspeare, and once in the poetical works of Milton.

‘Christians in general, therefore, would oppose to such a creed as that of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, not the pretence of conclusions which they can demonstrate against all comers, but strong and deep convictions continually assailed and sometimes agitated by insoluble difficulties.’—J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Gospel and Modern Life*, p. xiii.

In some instances our nouns in *-er*, *-ier*, represent the French *-ière*, as *river*, *rivière*; *barrier*, *barrière*.

340. Another form, *-eer*, is of more limited use, as *auctioneer*, *buccaneer*, *charioteer*, *mountaineer*, *muleteer*, *pamphleteer*, *pioneer*, *privateer*.

This form is sometimes used half-playfully:

*fellow-circuiteer.*

'The enormous gains of my old fellow-circuiteer, Charles Austin, who is said to have made 40,000 guineas by pleading before Parliament in one session.'—Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, 1818.

The terminations of words are peculiarly liable to decay, especially in their vocalism (110); and this displays itself with great effect after a period of transition, so that one new form shall represent several elder ones, or two or three modern forms shall confusedly represent twice as many old ones. Thus the *-er*, *-ier*, *-eer* of modern English represents Saxon *-ere* and *-a*, French *-er*, *-ier*, *-eur*, and *-ière*.

341. In *-ee*. This termination is from the French passive participle.

Examples:—*devotee*, *feoffee*, *guarantee*, *mortgagee*, *nominee*, *payee*, *referee*, *refugee*, *trustee*.

Illustration:—

*referee.*

'In this clamour of antagonistic opinions, history is obviously the sole upright impartial referee.'—J. B. Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 1868.

The original passive character of the form still shines out in most of the examples; and often there is an active substantive as a counterpart. Thus *grantor*, *grantee*; *lessor*, *lessee*; *mortgagor*, *mortgagee*.

Under this form come such names as *Pharisee*, *Sadducee*, *Manichee* (for which *Manichean* is now more general), and *Yankee*.

342. In *-ard*, *-art*. Examples:—*bastard*, *braggart*, *buzzard*,

*bustard*, *coward*, *dastard*, *dotard* (Spenser, *Faery Queene*, iii. 9. 8), *drunkard*, *dullard*, *haggard* (a sort of hawk), *laggard*, *mallard*, *niggard*, *pollard*, *sluggard*, *standard*, *tankard* (= a little *tank*, French *étang*, Latin *stagnum*), *wizard*.

Here should be mentioned also two national designations, *Spaniard*, *Savoyard*.

*placard.*

‘Good Lord, how cross and opposite is man’s conceit to God’s, and how contrary our thoughts unto His! For even *ad oppositum* to this position of His, we see for the most part that even they that are the goers forth seem to persuade themselves that *then* they may do what they list; that at that time any sin is lawful, that war is rather a placard than an inhibition to sin.’—Lancelot Andrewes, Sermon on Deut. xxiii. 9.

343. In *-ine*, *-in*, after the French from the Latin *-inus*, *-ina*.

Examples:—*basin*, *cousin*, *florin*, *libertine*, *matins*, *rapine*, *resin*, *routine*, *ruin*, *vermin*.

Altered forms:—*canteen* (cantina = cellar), *curtain*, *don* (dominus), *garden* (jardin), *paten*, *venom* (venin).

344. In *-ure*, Latin *-ura*, as *mensura*.

Examples:—*capture*, *caricature*, *censure*, *culture*, *embrasure*, *expenditure*, *failure*, *fissure*, *furniture*, *garniture*, *imposture*, *manure*, *measure*, *miniature*, *mixture*, *nature*, *nomenclature*, *nurture*, *overture*, *pasture*, *picture*, *posture*, *pourtraiture*, *pressure*, *primogeniture*, *procedure*, *rapture*, *seizure*, *signature*, *stature*, *suture*, *torture*, *verdure*.

Assimilated are *leisure*, *treasure*, from the French *loisir*, *trésor*.

Illustration:—

*closure.*

‘And for his warlike feates renowned is,  
From where the day out of the sea doth spring,  
Untill the closure of the Evening.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 3. 27.

345. In *-ise* or *-ice*: after two or three various Latin terminations, but typically from *-itia*.



Examples: — *covetise* Spenser, *cowardice*, *fool-hardise* Spenser, *justice*, *malice*, *merchandise*, *nigardise* Spenser, *Faery Queene*, iv. 8. 15, *notice*, *queintise* Chaucer, *riotise* Spenser.

*gentrise*, *covetise*.

‘Wonder it ys sire emperour that noble gentrise  
That is so noble and eke y fuld with so fyl couetyse.’

*Robert of Gloucester*, p. 46.

*Franchise* was a great word in the French period, and it had a wide range of significations. Among other things it meant privilege, exemption, and also good manners, good breeding, which latter occurs among the numerous renderings of this word in Randle Cotgrave’s *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, 1611.

*franchise*.

‘We mote, he sayde, be hardy and stalworthe and wyse,  
3ef we wole habbe oure lyf, and hold our franchise.’

*Robert of Brunne*, p. 155.

‘Consideryng the best on every syde,  
That fro his lust yet were him lever abyde,  
Than doon so high a churlisch wrecchednesse  
Agayns fraunchis of alle gentilesce.’

Chaucer, *The Frankeleynes Tale*, l. 11828; ed. Tyrwhitt.

To this class belonged the French word *pentice* or *pentise*, of which the last syllable had been already before Shakespeare’s time anglicised into ‘house,’ making a sort of compound, *pent-house*.

We must admit into this set such words as *prejudice*, *service*, and we cannot make the Latin termination *-itium* a ground of distinction in English philology, where words are assimilated in form. On the confluence of formatives see 339.

346. In the sixteenth century these words were often written with a *z*. No variety of sense or even of sound

appears to have been connected with this orthography. It was mere fashion. As *y* was a fashionable substitute for *i*, and as it was modish to elongate words by a final *e*, so also with the *z* as a substitute for *s*. Queen Elizabeth wrote her name with a *z*, and that alone was an influential example. In some cases the fashion disappeared and left no traces behind it, in other cases it was the origin of the received orthography. Thus *wizard* became the recognised form instead of *wisard*, which was the spelling of Spenser, as may be seen above 326.

In *The Faery Queene* we see this fashion well displayed. There are such forms as *bruze*, *uze* (iii. 5. 33), *wize*, *disguize*, *exercize*, *guize* (iii. 6. 23), *Paradize* (iii. 6. 29), *enterprize*, *emprize*, *arize*, *devize* (vi. 1. 5). So that there is nothing to marvel at if we find *covetise* (= covetousness) spelt *covetize* (iii. 4. 7), and the substantive which we now write *practice*, written *practize*:—

‘Ne ought ye want but skil, which practize small  
Wil bring, and shortly make you a mayd Martiall.’ (iii. 3. 53.)

347. But there is a much more important observation to be made concerning this French substantive form. It seems that we must acknowledge it to have introduced one of the most extensive modern innovations. It was apparently the employment of this substantive as a verb that gave us our first verbs in *-ize*, and so ushered the Greek *-ίζειν*. An unfamiliar example of one of these substantives verbally employed may be quoted from the correspondence of Throgmorton and Cecil in 1567:—

‘They would not merchandise for the bear’s skin before they had caught the bear.’—Quoted by J. A. Froude, *History of England*, vol. ix. p. 163.

Indeed, there are instances in which the substantive of this form is no longer known, while the verb is in familiar use. Such is the verb *to chastise* (pronounced as if spelt

with *z*), which appears in its substantive character, equivalent to chastity, in Turbervile, *Poem to his Loue* (about 1530):—

‘And sooth it is she liude  
in wiuely bond so well,  
As she from Collatinus wife  
of chastice bore the bell.’

I imagine the case is the same with the verbs *to jeopardise*, and *to advertise*. Both of these I would identify with this substantive form, though I am not prepared with an example of either in its substantive character. But there is perhaps evidence enough in Shakspeare’s pronunciation that the verb *to advertise* was not formed from the Greek *-ize*. In all cases does this verb in Shakspeare sound as *advertice*, and never as now *advertize*:—

‘Aduertysing, and holy to your busnesse.’

*Measure for Measure*, v. 1. 381.

‘Please it your Grace to be aduertised.’

2 *Henry VI*, iv. 9. 22.

‘For by my Scouts, I was aduertised.’

3 *Henry VI*, ii. 1. 116.

‘I haue aduertis’d him by secret meanes.’

3 *Henry VI*, iv. 5. 9.

‘We are aduertis’d by our louing friends.’

3 *Henry VI*, v. 3. 18.

‘As I by friends am well aduertised.’

*Richard III*, iv. 4. 501.

‘Wherein he might the King his Lord aduertise.’

*Henry VIII*, ii. 4. 178.

In one instance the First Folio has it with a *z*, but it makes no difference:

‘I was aduertiz’d, their Great generall slept.’

*Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3. 211.

We have still several substantives of the *-ice* type, as *cowardice*, *justice*, *malice*, *notice*; but I cannot call to mind

more than one verb in which this primitive form is retained, and that is the verb *to notice*.

**348.** In *-esse*, and by anglicism *-ess*. Either from the Latin *-issa*, as *abbatissa*, or from *-itia*, like the last. M. Brachet derives it from *-itia*: so that it would be little more than a collateral form to the last. And the French language presents us with *justice* and *justesse*, co-existent in differing shades of sense.

Examples:—*finesse* (an acknowledged English word, included in Poynder's School Dictionary), *largess*, *prowess*.

*Riches* belongs here by its extraction, as it is only an altered form of *richesse*. In grammatical conception it has passed from a singular to a plural without a singular. This was one of the effects of centuries of Latin schooling. The word *richesse* having been constantly used to render *opes* or *divitiæ*, which are plural forms, and being itself so nearly like an English plural, has thus come to be so conceived of, and written accordingly.

*Burgess* has taken this shape, but it is from the French *bourgeois*, and that from the Latin *burgensis*.

The form *-esse*, as derived from *-issa*, has its chief importance as expressive of the feminine gender. Examples of this will be found at the close of the section.

**349.** In the French reign must be included also the forms in *-ily* and *-ly*.

In *-ity*, from the Latin *-ilas*; as *quality*, *vanity*. The English termination is after the French *-ité*, with the last syllable accented, because it represents the two syllables of the Latin accusative *-tatem*.

Examples:—*antiquity*, *benignity*, *civility*, *dexterity*, *equality*, *fidelity*, *gratuity*, *humanity*, *integrity*, *joviality*, *legibility*, *majority*, *nativity*, *obscurity*, *posterity*, *quality*, *rapidity*, *sincerity*, *timidity*, *urbanity*, *velocity*.

Illustration :—

*civility, equity, humanity, morality, security.*

‘The morality of our earthly life, is a morality which is in direct subservience to our earthly accommodation ; and seeing that equity, and humanity, and civility, are in such visible and immediate connection with all the security and all the enjoyment which they spread around them, it is not to be wondered at, that they should throw over the character of him by whom they are exhibited, the lustre of a grateful and a superior estimation.’—Thomas Chalmers, Sermon V. (1819).

**350.** and **-ty**, a curt form of the same, intimately associated with the legal and political ideas of that early stage of our national life when French was the language of administration.

Examples :—*admiralty, casually, certainty, fealty, loyalty, mayoralty, nicely, novelty, personally, really, royalty, shrievalty, sovereignty, spirituality, surely, temporality.*

*chiefely, souverainety.*

‘I could wish that in this discourse and in the whole body of your booke whersoever mention is made of τὸ κύριον, you should give yt the same name. You terme yt sometymes chiefely of dominion sometymes souverainety, sometimes imperiall power. I thinke theys wordes (souverainety of dominion or souveraine dominion) are the fittest to be alwayes used, and plainest to be understood. If you be of this mynd, you may alter those places before, and make them all alike.’—George Cranmer, *MS. Notes on Hooker's Sixth Book*. Hooker's Works, ed. Keble, vol. iii. p. 114.

*Mayoralty* has taken as much as *-alty* for its suffix, and so grouped itself with *admiralty, royalty, spirituality, temporality*.

From the comparison of these two forms we may observe by how slight a variation in form great distinctions are sometimes expressed. Whereas *personalty* signifies personal property, chattels, *personality* signifies the possession of conscious life : whereas *really* signifies real property, as land or houses, *reality* signifies the objective existence of things. The one is after an earlier, the other after a more modern French form. In some instances we see words changing

from one form to another as a mere fashion, and without any adequate distinction. Thus *specially* seems to be endangered by the tendency to imitate the French *spécialité*.

351. As to the origin of all the forms in the above list, it clearly cannot belong to English philology to do much more than indicate the source from which we received them. Their derivation into French from Latin has therefore been only slightly touched upon. The reader who wishes to know more on this head should consult the *Historical Grammar of the French Tongue*, by Auguste Brachet, an admirable manual, which has been rendered accessible to the English student by Mr. Kitchin's Translation. This book supplies all the information which is needed for tracing the forms intelligently from the Latin through the French, to the threshold of their entrance into the English language.

This would seem to be the place to glance at some other substantives which we have acquired from Romanesque languages, or through a Romanesque channel.

There are a certain number of nouns which have come to us through the French, from the southern Romance languages. Such are those words

352. In *-ade*, *-ad*, which represent the termination *-atus* of the Latin participle—*ballad*, *balustrade*, *barricade*, *brigade*, *cannonade*, *cascade*, *cavalcade*, *comrade*, *crusade*, *esplanade*, *fusillade*, *lemonade*, *marmalade*, *masquerade*, *palisade*, *parade*, *promenade*, *salad*, *serenade*, *stockade*, *tirade*.

Illustration :—

*fusillade*.

'Everybody acquainted with country life must be aware of the commotion created in some of our villages by the first fall of snow, especially if it happens on a Sunday. Old and young turn out, leaving the parson to edify women and empty pews, and high up on the hills and down in the valleys such a fusillade ensues on the day of rest as could hardly be justified by any event short of the landing of the French invaders upon our shores.'

These remind us of a few Spanish analogues in *-ada* and *-ado*, as *Armada*, *bravado*.

353. Round by the Spanish peninsula have also come to us those English (or rather European) nouns which are derived from Arabic, as *alchemy*, *alcohol*, *alcove*, *algebra*, *almanac*, *ammiral* (Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 294), *cipher*, *elixir*, *magazine*, *nadir*, *zenith*.

To these we must add a word, once celebrated, though now obsolete, *algorithm*, or more familiarly, *augrim*. Also sometimes, *algorism*, after the French *algorisme*. This Arabic word was the universal term in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to denote the science of calculation by nine figures and zero, which was gradually superseding the abacus or ball-frame, with its counters.

'I shall reken it syxe times by aulgorisine, or you can caste it ones by counters.'—John Palsgrave, *French Grammar*, 1530<sup>1</sup>.

Nor must we overlook the Italian words that are gradually winning their way into the list of English substantives. They are almost all in a direct or indirect sense derived from the artistic terminology of Italian poetry, or music, or painting, or architecture. Such are *campanile*, *canto*, *cantata*, *cupola*, *dilettante*, *extravaganza*, *finale*, *forte*, *fresco*, *opera*, *oratorio*, *orchestra*, *piano*, *sonata*, *stanza*, *stiletto*, *studio*, *trombone*, *virtuoso*, *violoncello*.

Some of these have obtained more general use, as *finale*; and *extravaganza* has found a popular application:—

'The admitted exaggerations in *Pickwick* are incident to its club's extravaganza of adventure.'—John Forster, *Life of Dickens*, ch. viii.

354. The effect of the French pre-occupation of our language was not limited to the period of its reign. It also

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Albert Way's note in *Promptorium Parvulorum*, p. 18.

imparted a tinge to the subsequent period of classic influence. The Latin words that were next admitted into English, became subject to those French forms which were already familiar among us; and so much so, that it is rather arbitrary work to pretend to draw the line of division.

### *Latin Forms.*

**355.** In **-ance** and **-ancy**, from the Latin *-antia*; as *circumstance*, *constancy*, *substance*. The words *acquaintance*, *cognisance*, *obeisance*, and many others of this form, are rather French than Latin.

Illustration:—

*cognisance.*

‘The honourable member ought himself to be aware that in this house we have no cognisance of what passes in debate in the other house.’—House of Commons, July 21, 1869.

**356.** In **-ence** and **-ency**, from the Latin *-entia*.

Examples:—*affluence*, *beneficence*, *benevolence*, *circumference*, *competence*, *confidence*, *conscience*, *consequence*, *continence*, *diffidence*, *diffidence*, *eminence*, *evidence*, *exigence*, *experience*, *impotence*, *influence*, *licence*, *magnificence*, *munificence*, *negligence*, *opulence*, *preference*, *reticence*, *science*, *sequence*.

Illustration:—

*pubescence.*

‘Pubescence on the branches, peduncles, or tube of the calyx is the only invariable character I have discovered in Roses. Distinctions drawn from it I have every reason to consider absolute.’—John Lindley, *A Monograph of Roses* (1820), p. xxiii.

Here again we meet with that confluence of forms of which we have already spoken above; and we are obliged to admit into this set some formatives which are of a different origin, being either from Latin nouns in *-ensio*, or from



Latin participles in *-ensus*, but they have been assimilated to this group. Such are *defence*, *expence* (obsolete), *offence*, *prelence*. With these may be mentioned a few which have not succumbed to this assimilation, as *incense*, *sense*, *suspense*, and one which has recovered its original classical consonant, namely *expense*. Our spelling in this, as in many other instances, is a tradition from the French fashion of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. Cotgrave, in 1611, recognises *offence*, but gives the palm to *offense*, which has continued to the present day as the correct orthography in French. Our language is slower to admit this classic reform, though good writers have observed it, as for instance Augustus W. Hare.

The *-ency* form is peculiarly English. *Clemency* is in French *clemence*.

These two forms are liable to clash in their plurals. It is questioned which is right, *excellences* or *excellencies*. Each is right in its place; the former is generally used in the sense of abstract quality, the latter for titles of distinction. In our old writers *excellency* is frequently found in the sense which *excellence* now bears, and they have never got quite disentangled.

**357.** In *-osity*; as *animosity*, *curiosity*, *impetuosity*, *pomposity*, *scrupulosity*.

The forms in *-ity* and *-ty* have been ranked under French products, but *-osity* grew out of Latin studies. Its boisterous youth was in the seventeenth century, when several examples were launched into currency, and soon stranded. Such were *fabulosity*, *mulierosity*, *populosity*, *speciosity*.

'So great a glory as all the speciosities of the world could not equalize.'—Henry More, *On Godliness*, iv. 12. § 4.

**358.** In *-ion*, *-tion*, *-ation*, *-ition*, from the Latin, *-io*, *-atio*, *-itio*, genitive *-ionis*; as *accusation*, *action*, *compassion*,

*contrition, coronation, description, emulation, humiliation, investigation, region, relation, reputation, situation, satisfaction, transaction.*

*salutation.*

'We behold men, to whom are awarded, by the universal voice, all the honours of a proud and unsullied excellence—and their walk in the world is dignified by the reverence of many salutations—and as we hear of their truth and their uprightness, and their princely liberalities,' &c.—Thomas Chalmers, Sermon V. (1819).

This abstract form is capable of a thundering eloquence, under conditions fitted to exhibit its full effects. When a new ship of war of the most advanced and formidable class of turret-ships was lately announced by the name of 'The Devastation,' it might well be said that the new cast of name was an apt exponent of the weight of metal by which the terrors of marine warfare have recently been enhanced.

This is a form upon which new words have been made with great facility, as witness the off-hand words *salvation*, *starvation*.

'When Mr. H. Dundas used the word *starvation* in the House of Commons, it was received with a roar of derision as a north-country barbarism.'—J. B. Heard, *The Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 83, note.

A gardener once desiring to have his work admired—he had been moving some of the raspberries, to make the rows more regular—'There, sir,' cried he, 'that's what I call row-tation now!' From this facility it has naturally followed that many have grown obsolete. Jeremy Taylor uses *luxation* to signify the disturbing, disjoining, disconcerting, shocking of the understanding:—

'An honest error is better than a hypocritical profession of truth, or a violent luxation of the understanding.'—*Liberty of Prophecy*, ix. 2.

It is a phenomenon which may as well be remarked generally and once for all, that in the prime of their vigour

forms often overpass the area which they are permanently to occupy. Under each form we might collect a number of words that have perished, not from age and decay, but just because they were started rather in obedience to a strong formative impulse of the moment, than from any occasion the language had for their services.

Dr. Trench, in his pamphlet *On some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries* (1857), has made a collection of such words, from which we have just now derived our obsolete examples under *-osity*, and are fain to draw from the same good source also under *-ation* as, *coaxation*, *conculcation*, *dehonestation*, *delinition*, *excarminification*, *quadripartition*, *sub-sannation*.

**359.** In *-our*; as *ardour*, *fervour*, *honour*, *valour*.

In this class of words, derived at secondhand from the Latin in *-or*, as *fervor*, *ardor*, the *u* is a trace of the French medium. This distortion has moreover communicated itself even where there was previously nothing either of French or of Latin, as in the purely Saxon compound *neighbour* from *neh*, *nigh*, and *gebâr*, dweller.

A partial disposition has manifested itself to drop this French *u*. Especially is this observable in American literature. But the general rule holds good through this whole series of nouns from the Latin, that what we call 'anglicising' them, is the reducing of them to a set of forms which we borrowed originally from French. And thus it is true that the French influence still accompanies us, even through the course of our latinising epoch.

Latin scholarship was, however, continually nibbling away at these monuments of the French reign. The forms of many of our Romanesque nouns were too permanently fixed to be shaken; but wherever the classical scholar could make an English word more like Latin, he was fain to do it.

The French form *parlement* was drawn nearer to its Latin form of *parliamentum*; and a word of old standing, like *Cristen*, as old in our speech as the national conversion, was re-latinised into *Christian*. Instances of this kind render the obstinacy of this French form the more observable.

**360.** In *-al*. This form, which is derived from the Latin adjectival formative *-alis*, *-ale*, has attached itself not only to words radically Latin, as *acquittal*, *dismissal*, *disposal*, *nuptials*, *proposal*, *recital*, *refusal*, *rental*, *revival*, but also to others which are either French, as *avowal*, *rehearsal*, or purely English, as *uprootal* (Dr. Lightfoot, *Paul and Seneca*), and the familiar geological term *upheaval*.

Illustrations:—

*testimonial*.

‘And thus it is, that there is a morality of this world, which stands in direct opposition to the humbling representations of the Gospel; which cannot comprehend what it means by the utter worthlessness and depravity of our nature; which passionately repels this statement, and that too on its own consciousness of attainments superior so those of the sordid and the profligate and the dishonourable; and is fortified in its resistance to the truth as it is in Jesus, by the flattering testimonials which it gathers to its respectability and its worth from the various quarters of human society.’—Thomas Chalmers, Sermon V. (1819).

*approval, refusal*.

‘I well remember his [O’Connell’s] smile as he nodded good-humouredly to us as we passed him; and I must say it was one of approval rather than otherwise at our refusal to do him homage.’—W. Steuart Trench, *Realities of Irish Life*, p. 39.

A word which does not belong here, but which has assumed the guise of this set, is *bridal*, from the Saxon BRYD, bride, and ÆALO, ale; so that it really meant the *ale* or festivity of the bride. One or two other compounds on this model, such as *church-ale*, *scot-ale*, have become obsolete.

Another word, which has an equally deceptive appearance of being formed with the Latin *-al* is *burial*. This is a pure Saxon word from its first letter to its last. The Saxon form is *byrigels*, a form which is of the singular number, though it ends with *s*. The plural was *byrigelsas*.

**361.** In *-ate*, from the Latin *-atus*, participle or substantive.

Examples :—*consulate*, *episcopate*, *estimate*, *opiate*, *magnate*, *syndicate*, *tribunate*.

**362.** In *-tude*, from the Latin substantives in *-tudo*, *-tudinis*.

Examples :—*attitude*, *beatitude*, *certitude*, *disquietude*, *fortitude*, *gratitude*, *latitude*, *longitude*, *magnitude*, *multitude*, *solicitude*, *solitude*, *turpitude*, *vicissitude*.

*turpitude.*

‘There is ever with you, lying folded in the recesses of your bosom, and pervading the whole system both of your desires and of your doings, that which gives to sin all its turpitude, and all its moral hideousness in the sight of God. There is a rooted preference of the creature to the Creator.—Thomas Chalmers, Sermon III. (1819).

*disquietude.*

‘Look around this congregation. We are all more or less the children of sorrow. There is not one of us who has not within him some known or secret cause of disquietude.’—Charles Bradley, *Clapham Sermons*, 1831; Sermon VII.

*solicitude.*

‘The excellent breed of sheep, which early became the subject of legislative solicitude, furnished them with an important staple.’—William H. Prescott, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, vol. i. p. 29 (ed. 1838).

**363.** The substantives in *-ite* must be reckoned among the Latin ones, as we received the form through the Latin; but it is Greek by origin.

It was of European celebrity in the middle ages as a class word, especially for sects and opinions. The followers of the early heresies were often thus designated, as

*Monothelites, Marcionites, Monophysites.* Yet the odium which now attaches to this form cannot have been felt in the sixteenth century, or our Bible would not shew it so generally as it does, not only in such cases as *Canaanite, Perizzite, Hivite, and Jebusite*, but also in *Levite, Gadite, Manassite, and Bethlehemite*.

Already, however, at the close of the seventeenth century, we find the ecclesiastical historian Jeremy Collier, using the term *Wicliffists*, as if with purpose to avoid writing *Wiclifite*, which was the usual form. And thus in our own time the alumni of Winchester are justly sensitive about being called Wykehamites instead of *Wykehamists*.

The fact is, that with our sensitiveness about religious differences, this form has become almost odious; and we scruple to quote instances of its application out of respect for names that may be embodied. Suffice it for illustration to put down such as *Joanna-Southcotites* and *Mormonites*.

Still, there are terms of speech in which it may come in harmlessly or even pleasantly:—

‘Whilst the trial was going on, and the issue still uncertain, I met Coleridge, who said, “Well, Robinson, you are a Queenite, I hope?”—“Indeed I am not.”—“How is that possible?”—“I am only an anti-Kingite.”—“That’s just what I mean.”’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1820.

### *Greek Forms.*

**364.** Coming now to Greek formations, the most conspicuous are the following:—

Nouns in *-y* from Greek words in *-ia* and *-eia*; as *academy, agony, irony, tyranny*.

*irony* (εἰρωνεία).

‘There was no mockery in Miss Austen’s irony. However heartily we laugh at her pictures of human imbecility, we are never tempted to think that contempt or disgust for human nature suggested the satire.’

*synonymy* (συνωνυμία).

'As the synonymy is one of the most difficult and perhaps important parts of the subject, it has of course received particular attention. But I have rarely been very anxious about the synonyms of botanists of an earlier date than the time of Linnæus, on account of the extreme uncertainty of the precise plants which they intended.'—John Lindley, *A Monograph of Roses*, 1820; p. ix.

*threnody* (θρηνηδία).

'We crave not a memorial stone  
For those who fell at Marathon;  
Their fame with every breeze is blent,  
The mountains are their monument,  
And the low plaining of the sea  
Their everlasting threnody.'

*The Three Fountains* (1869), p. 100.

365. In *-ism*, from the Greek *-ισμος*; as *atheism*, *catechism*, *euphemism*, *idolism* Milton, *materialism*, *modernism*, *polytheism*, *propagandism*, *schism*, *ventriloquism*.

*Scotticism*, *Protestantism*, *Catholicism*, *Presbyterianism*.

'For our part, we should say that the special habit or peculiarity which distinguishes the intellectual manifestations of Scotchmen—that, in short, in which the Scotticism of Scotchmen most intimately consists—is the habit of *emphasis*. All Scotchmen are emphatic. If a Scotchman is a fool, he gives such emphasis to the nonsense he utters, as to be infinitely more insufferable than a fool of any other country; if a Scotchman is a man of genius, he gives such emphasis to the good things he has to communicate, that they have a supremely good chance of being at once or very soon attended to. This habit of emphasis, we believe, is exactly that *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* which used to be remarked some centuries ago, wherever Scotchmen were known. But emphasis is perhaps a better word than fervour. Many Scotchmen are fervid too, but not all; but all, absolutely all, are emphatic. No one will call Joseph Hume a fervid man, but he is certainly emphatic. And so with David Hume, or Reid, or Adam Smith, or any of those colder-natured Scotchmen of whom we have spoken; fervour cannot be predicated of them, but they had plenty of emphasis. In men like Burns, or Chalmers, or Irving, on the other hand, there was both emphasis and fervour; so also with Carlyle; and so, under a still more curious combination, with Sir William Hamilton. And as we distinguish emphasis from fervour, so would we distinguish it from perseverance. Scotchmen are said to be persevering, but the saying is not universally true; Scotchmen are or are not morally persevering, but all Scotchmen are

intellectually emphatic. Emphasis, we repeat, intellectual emphasis, the habit of laying stress on certain things rather than co-ordinating all, in this consists what is essential in the Scotticism of Scotchmen. And, as this observation is empirically verified by the very manner in which Scotchmen enunciate their words in ordinary talk, so it might be deduced scientifically from what we have already said regarding the nature and effects of the feeling of nationality. The habit of thinking emphatically is a necessary result of thinking much in the presence of, and in resistance to, a negative; it is the habit of a people that has been accustomed to act on the defensive, rather than of a people peacefully evolved and accustomed to act positively; it is the habit of Protestantism rather than of Catholicism, of Presbyterianism rather than of Episcopacy, of Dissent rather than of Conformity.'—David Masson, *Essays* (1856); 'Scottish Influence in British Literature.'

*dogmatism, rationalism.*

'All Dogmatic Theology' is not Dogmatism, nor the use of all Reason, Rationalism, any more than all drinking is drunkenness.'—H. L. Mansel, *Bampton Lectures*, Pref. to Fourth Edition.

*Stoicism.*

'Stoicism was in fact the earliest offspring of the union between the religious consciousness of the East and the intellectual culture of the West.'—Professor Lightfoot, *St. Paul and Seneca*.

*ventriloquism.*

'Coleridge praised "Wallenstein," but censured Schiller for a sort of ventriloquism in poetry. By-the-by, a happy term to express that common fault of throwing the sentiments and feelings of the writer into the bodies of other persons, the characters of the poem.'—Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, &c., vol. i. p. 396.

*criticism, idealism, realism.*

'In calling imitation and design the two constituents of art, and in defining realism as the preponderance of imitation and idealism of design in a work of art, the writer adopts a good enough working analysis, if not a final or very penetrating one. In conclusion, contending that the grandest power of design is much more closely dependent on perfect power of imitation, and therefore that idealism is much more closely allied to realism, than is commonly supposed, Mr. Poynter is led to a passage of detailed criticism on Michelangelo, which is the most telling part of his paper.'—*The Academy*, June 15, 1871.

*scepticism.*

'Scepticism, to be worth anything, should be the thoroughly trained habit of looking deeply into *all* sides of the question, and not merely at the outside of one or two.'—Sir Edward Strachey, *Spectator*, Dec. 30, 1871.



How readily new words are builded on this model may be seen from the following:—

‘The three schools of geological speculation which I have termed *Catastrophism*, *Uniformitarianism*, and *Evolutionism*, are commonly supposed to be antagonistic to one another.’—*Address of the President of the Geological Society*, 1869.

The form *witticism* seems to imply that *-cism* has been accepted as the formative, perhaps after the pattern of *Catholicism*, *ostracism*, *Stoicism*.

These nouns are in fact now formed just as readily as the verbs in *-ize*, from which the noun-formative *-ism* is an outgrowth.

**366.** And so is *-ist*; as *atheist*, *casuist*, *chemist*, *dogmatist*, *egotist*, *idolist* Milton, *mesmerist*, *methodist*, *ministerialist*, *novelist*, *publicist*, *ritualist*, *Wykehamist*.

*publicist*.

‘The same evening I had an introduction to one who, in any place but Weimar, would have held the first rank, and who in his person and bearing impressed every one with the feeling that he belonged to the highest class of men. This was Herder. The interview was, if possible, more insignificant than that with Goethe—partly, perhaps, on account of my being introduced at the same time with a distinguished publicist, to use the German term, the eminent political writer and statesman, Friedrich Gentz, the translator of Burke on the French Revolution.’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1801.

*atheist*, *pantheist*, *polytheist*.

‘The whole world seems to give the lie to the great truth of the being of a God; and of that great truth my whole being is full: so that were it not for the voice speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, pantheist, or polytheist when I looked into the world.’—J. H. Newman, *Apologia*.

**367.** But fond as we appear to be of the Greek verbs in *-ize* and the Greek nouns in *-ism*, *-ist*, we have drawn very little from a Greek form that lies close beside these. There are Greek verbs in *-aze*, and corresponding noun-forms in *-asm*, *-ast*, which have been almost neglected by us. We have a few English nouns

In **-asm**, as *chasm*, *enthusiasm*, *pleonasm*, *protoplasm*, *sarcasm*, *spasm*.

*enthusiasm*.

‘Wahabeeism was the last wave of Mahomedan enthusiasm.’—C. E. Trevelyan, *Times*, Nov. 14, 1871.

And also **-ast**, as *enthusiast*, *periphrast*, *protoplast*.

‘Upon such considerations, to me it appears to be most reasonable, that the circumference of our protoplast’s senses should be the same with that of nature’s activity: unless we will derogate from his perfections, and so reflect a disparagement on him that made us.’—Joseph Glanvil, *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661.

**368.** In **-ics**, a plural collective after the Greek *-ικά*, in which the last letter being the sign of plurality has been translated into the English *-s*.

Examples:—*acoustics*, *calisthenics*, *ethics*, *gymnastics*, *mathematics*, *mechanics*, *metaphysics*, *mnemonics*, *optics*, *poetics*, *poleemics*, *politics*.

Under this set an observation may be made which has been for some time due—namely, that the traces of French influence are now become sparse and rare. Here we have judged for ourselves what to borrow from the Greek, and how to reduce it to English form. In the instances before us both Latin and French express the idea unlike ourselves. In French the plural *politiques* means politicians. Yet there is an elder group of these in which we have retained the French singular without alteration, as *arithmetic*, *logic*, *magic*, *music*, *rhetoric*.

Among our Greek specimens, as under the other groups, there are some which cannot be classified, because of the detrition of the formative part, and which yet call for mention in a catalogue of English substantives. One such is the important word *method*, which has played a part in our language.

‘I would advise you as much as possible to throw your business into a certain method, by which means you will learn to improve every precious

moment, and find an unspeakable facility in the performance of your respective duties.'—Letter from his Mother to Samuel Wesley at Westminster (1709).

369. A considerable number of Latin and Greek words have been adopted in their original and unaltered forms. Such are, *abacus*, *acumen*, *agis*, *album*, *alumnus*, *animus*, *antithesis*, *apex*, *apparatus*, *arcana*, *area*, *arena*, *asthma*, *basis*, *bathos*, *census*, *chaos*, *character*, *circus*, *compendium*, *cosmos*, *crisis*, *criterion*, *deficit*, *encomium*, *epitome*, *equilibrium*, *eulogium*, *formula*, *fungus*, *gravamen*, *horizon*, *hypothesis*, *index*, *interest*, *ilem*, *maximum*, *medium*, *memento*, *memorandum*, *minimum*, *minutiæ*, *modicum*, *momentum*, *oasis*, *odium*, *onus*, *paralysis*, *parenthesis*, *pathos*, *phenomenon*, *prospectus*, *radius*, *regimen*, *requiem*, *residuum*, *sanatorium*, *squalor*, *status*, *stigma*, *stimulus*, *tedium*, *terminus*, *ultimatum*, *vortex*.

Jane Austen censured one of her nieces for writing about a 'vortex of dissipation,' the expression was so intolerably hackneyed.

One of the most familiar and most frequently used of this set is *epitome*, as—

'Paul's walk is the land's epitome; or you may call it the lesser isle of Great Britain. It is more than this, the whole world's map, which you may here discern in its perfectest motion, justling and turning.'—John Earle, *Microcosmography*, ed. Bliss, 1811; p. 116.

or, as in Dryden's character of Villiers:—

'A man so various that he seemed to be  
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:  
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,  
Was everything by starts, and nothing long;  
But, in the course of one revolving moon,  
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.'

*Absalom and Achitophel.*

*interest.*

'He hates our sacred Nation; and he rails  
Even there where Merchants most doe congregate,  
On me, my bargaines, and my well-worne thrift,  
Which he calls interest: Cursed be my trybe  
If I forgive him.'

*Merchant of Venice*, i. 1.

*character, medium.*

‘Character is moral order seen through the medium of an individual nature.’—Emerson.

‘Madame de Staël said, and the general remark is true, “The English mind is in the middle between the German and the French, and is a medium of communication between them.”’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, vol. i. p. 175.

370. In conclusion, we will notice a group of nouns of a peculiarly national stamp. They are easy and familiar expressions formed by a curtailment of longer words, and are mostly monosyllabic. It is generally but not always the first part that has been retained. Thus for speculation we hear *spec*, for omnibus *bus*, for cabriolet *cab*, for incognito *incog*, and *stress* for distress. The curt expression of *tick* for credit is as old as the seventeenth century, and is corrupted from *ticket*, as a tradesman’s bill was formerly called. John Oldham (1683) has—

‘Reduced to want, he in due time felt sick,  
Was fain to die, and be interred on tick.’

‘*Compo* for composition appears to be known to the world of artists, to judge by the following passage:—

‘Now, gilding on a picture-frame is not only justifiable by way of ornament, but is much to be recommended as a foil or neutral ground for enhancing the value of colour; but it ought to be laid directly on the wood, without any intervening composition; and if any ornament in relief is attempted, it should be carved in the solid material. The effect of oak-grain seen through leaf-gold is exceedingly good, and the sense of *texture* thus produced is infinitely more interesting, than the smooth monotony of gilt “*compo*.”’—Charles L. Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste* (1869) ch. vii.

If it appear below the dignity of philology to notice such half-recognised slang, let it be remembered that this science is quite as much concerned with first efforts, of however uncouth an aspect, as it is with those mature forms which enjoy the most complete literary sanction. The words

which one generation calls slang, are not unfrequently the sober and decorous terms of that which succeeds. The term *bus* has made for itself a very tolerable position, and *cab* is absolutely established. The curt form of *gent* as a less ceremonious substitute for the full expression of 'gentleman,' had once made considerable way, but its career was blighted in a court of justice. It is about twenty years ago that two young men, being brought before a London magistrate, described themselves as 'gents.' The magistrate said that he considered that a designation little better than 'blackguard.' The abbreviate form has never been able to recover that shock.

A more respectable example of a curt form is the title *Miss*, which, though nothing but the first syllable of Mistress, has won its way to an honoured position.

371. Already in 1711, Mr. Spectator, in an interesting paper for the study of the English language, No. 135, commented upon the tendency of these curt forms to get themselves established.

'It is perhaps this humour of speaking no more than we needs must, which has so miserably curtailed some of our words, that in familiar writings and conversations they often lose all but their first syllables, as "mob. rep. pos. incog." and the like; and as all ridiculous words make their first entry into a language by familiar phrases, I dare not answer for these, that they will not in time be looked upon as part of our tongue.'

In fact, these words have a crude and fragmentary look only while they are recent. Give time enough, and the abruptness disappears. Who now thinks of *mole* (*talpa*) as a curt form of *moldiwarp* the mouldcaster? Who finds it vulgar to say *Consols*, though this is but a curt way of saying Consolidated Annuities? A *peal* of bells is even an elegant expression, although it is curtailed from *appeal*. *Story* is a pretty word, though curt for *history*. The short form has always borne a comparatively familiar sense, as it does to

the present day. It is only used twice in the text of our Bible, and then to represent *midrash*, that is, commentary upon history rather than history. But into the contents of the chapters, which are couched in homelier speech, we find it more readily admitted. Thus in Deuteronomy :—

‘CHAP. I. *Moses speech in the end of the fortieth yeere, briefly rebearring the story, &c.*’

‘CHAP. II. *The story is continued, &c.*’

‘CHAP. III. *The story of the conquest of Og king of Basban.*’

**372.** Curtailments which are now obsolete, are in some cases preserved to us in compound words. Thus the word *cobweb* seems to indicate that the *altercop* (old word for spider) was curtly called a *cop* or *cob*.

We have been very easy in our admission of long classic words; nay, we have exhibited a large appetite for them. But there still lingers the Saxon taste for the monosyllable, and it often breaks out in the writer of fine taste, when for a moment he feels unawed by critical observers: A clear example of this occurs in a letter of Keble’s, wherein he has adopted the highly expressive word *splotch*.

‘We have two girls and little Edward with us, and a great *splotch* of sunshine they make in the house.’—*Life of Keble*, p. 394.

This word has its habitat in Oxfordshire, where school-children may be heard to use it in speaking of a blot on their copybooks.

There has been in our time a visible reaction against the tyranny of long words, in favour of the despised monosyllable. We have not indeed arrived at the decision

‘To banish from the nation,  
All long-tail’d words in *osity* and *ation*.’

John Hookham Frere, *Whistlecraft* (1817).

But ostentation and pride of invention is now seen almost as often in short or Saxon-like words as it is in the long-

robed words of classic sweep. Perhaps it may be the case that the Americans are leading the way in this. Certain it is that words of this character do win their way into English literature from across the Atlantic. The following introduction of a new word is in point.

'Boston is the *bub* of the world. So say those who, not being Massachusetts men themselves, are disposed to impute extravagant pretensions to the good old Puritan city. The *bub*, in the language of America, is the nave, or centre-piece of the wheel, from which the spokes radiate, and on which the wheel turns. As the Americans make with their hickory wood the best wheels in the world, they have some right to give to one of the pieces a name of their own. But, however, Boston need not quarrel with the saying. Nations, like individuals, are generally governed by ideas, and no people to such a degree as the Americans: and the ideas which have governed them hitherto have been supplied from New England. But Massachusetts has been the wheel within New England, and Boston the wheel within Massachusetts. It has therefore been the first source and foundation of the ideas that have moved and made America; and is, in a high and honourable sense, the *bub* of the New World.'—F. Barham Zincke, *Last Winter in the United States* (1868), p. 279.

373. Familiar abbreviations of Christian names belong here. They are commonly made, with alteration or without, from the first syllable<sup>1</sup>. *Will*, *Tom*, *Wat* (from Walter, according to its old faded-French pronunciation *Water*), *Sam*, &c.

These are specially liable to alteration from the caprices of the little folk among whom they are most current, and to this cause (mixed with the imperfection of the childish organs of speech and the fondness which elder brothers and sisters have for propagating the original speeches of the little ones) must be assigned such forms as *Bob* for Rob, *Bill* for Will, *Dick* for Rich. Mr. Charles Dickens signed his writings

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<sup>1</sup> The Germans, having a diminutival form *-chen*, which attaches to the end of a word, are naturally led to preserve the final syllable in their familiar abbreviations of Christian names, as *Erstchen*, *Lottchen*, *Trudchen*, from *Margarethe*, *Charlotte*, *Gertrude*. In other cases, apart from this cause, it is the latter part that survives, as *Trin* for *Catharina*. But no general rule can be affirmed: *Fritz* is the universal 'Kosename' for *Friedrich*, and *Dittz* for *Dietrich*.

'Boz' after a facetious pronunciation of Moses, which was current in his family. In the case of names beginning with a vowel, the curt form takes a consonant, as *Ned*, *Noll*, *Nell*, for Edward, Oliver, and Ellen.

While we are upon these familiar appellations, we may as well complete the list by noticing some which do not spring from the causes here under consideration. *Harry* for Henry is a rough English imitation of the sound of the French Henri; *Jack* is the French Jacques, which has attached itself somehow to the English John.

374. A survey of English nouns would indeed be deficient which should omit that curt, stunt, slang element to which we as a nation are so remarkably prone, and in regard to which we stand in such contrast with our adoptive sister. The French language shrinks from such things as it were from an indecorum. Our public-school and university life is a great wellhead of new and irresponsible words. Gradually they find their way into literature. For example:—

*chaff.*

'He wishes to confound the whole school of those who think that a faith is to be tested by the inward experience of life. And so he sets himself to overwhelm Mr. Hughes with ridicule, rioting in that kind of banter vulgarly described as "chaff," and bringing up against him the stock difficulties which can always be cast in the way of belief.'—J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Gospel and Modern Life*, p. xviii.

375. And as such words in shoals proceed from the gathering-places of young Saxons, so also a kindred work is being achieved by that young Saxon world which lives beyond the western main. It almost seems as if they, or a certain school among them, were bent on raising a standard of rebellion, and were resolved to dispute that superiority which the classic tongues have so long exercised over our barbarian language. Nothing in American literature bears



such a stamp of originality and determination as those writings in which reverence for antiquity is utterly cast aside, and their old obedience to the King's English is thrown to the winds. The genial and suave satire of the *Biglow Papers* on the one hand, and the mocking horse-laugh of *Hans Breitmann* on the other, are at one in their contemptuous rejection of the old senatorial dignity of literary language. It is in both cases an audacious renunciation of the long captivity in which our speech and literature have been held under classic sway, and it seems to us at first sight as little less than an open declaration of the prior claims of familiarity and barbarism. But it cannot be denied that Mr. Lowell has practically demonstrated the power of mind over matter, the power of resolution over restraint, the superiority of thought in literature over every conventional limit that can be imposed upon the forms of expression. It is an assertion of the natural freedom of dialect and language and diction. Who, with any feeling for humour, can refuse to condone the literary audacity of the following? Nay, who can refuse to it a certain degree of admiration?

'I've noticed thet each half-baked scheme's abettors  
Are in the habbit o' producin' letters,  
Writ by all sorts o' never-heerd-on fellers,  
'bout as oridgenal ez the wind in bellers;  
I've noticed tu, it's the quack med'cines gits  
(An' needs) the grettest heap o' stiffykits.'

Or who with any love of nature can let the dialect blind him to the burst of real poetry that there is in this description of the New England spring, 'that gives one leap from April into June'?—

'Then all comes crowdin' in; afore you think,  
The oak-buds mist the side-hill woods with pink,  
The cat-bird in the laylock bush is loud,  
The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy cloud,

In ellum-shrouds the flashin' hangbird clings,  
 An' for the summer vy'ge his hammock slings,  
 All down the loose-walled lanes, in archin' bowers  
 The barb'ry droops its strings o' golden flowers . . . .  
 'Nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o' the year,  
 Gladness on wings, the bobolink is here;  
 Half hid in tip-top apple blooms he swings  
 Or climbs against the breeze with quivering wings,  
 Or givin' way to 't in a mock despair  
 Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru the air.'

Mr. Lowell's dialect is the true Yankee, the speech of the Northern farmer. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Leland's poetry represents any existing form of speech, but it is described as Pennsylvanian German<sup>1</sup>.

376. Returning to our own side of the Atlantic, we may observe that in a gradual and unobserved manner we are continually admitting words which once were disowned and disallowed.

Two remarkable examples are *clever* and *fun*<sup>2</sup>, words now in perfect credit; of which Johnson could call the former 'a low word' and the latter 'a low cant word.'

The general motive of the employment of such words is to escape conventionality; that is, to escape the triteness and dryness of that which is current and hackneyed, and this because the speaker longs to mingle with his words something of character or of humour or of good-fellowship—in a word something personal or emotional. Now it is plain, without reasoning, that to call each thing by the name that everybody calls it, without any little twist or twirl, is apt to seem commonplace and vapid. Kindly feelings desire a little playfulness in conversation; the sterner sentiments have also their claim for an utterance to fit them,—and both of these

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ellis calls it 'Pennsylvania German,' and he has illustrated this dialect in his work *On Early English Pronunciation*, Part iii. p. 655.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Trench, *English Past and Present*, seventh ed. p. 206.

are at times rebellious against conventionality. Consequently there has been found in most languages a faculty of shaping certain words to the temper of the speaker, or, so to speak, of giving them a moral colouring. Emotional substantives have been commonly called Diminutives, because the sentiments which have been most active in this work have been those of affectionate partiality on the one hand, or of contempt on the other; and therefore the idea of 'little' has been much felt in this strain of words. In some languages, such as the Italian, the term Diminutive appeared too narrow, and the grammarians made another class by the name of Augmentatives. But in this way of proceeding it would be necessary to invent more names, for varieties may be found as numerous as the shades of human feeling; and therefore it seems better to acquiesce in the common designation, however inadequate, only remembering what it really signifies. The Diminutives are emotional substantives, expressive of liking or aversion, of admiration or contempt, and accordingly conveying a good or a bad sense, a magnifying or diminishing effect. By the Italian *-accio* we may see how hard these variations are to classify.

\* Masaccio was born about the beginning of the century, in Valdarno, between Florence and Arezzo, and died as early as 1443, as was suspected, by poison. This distinguished artist merits particular attention, as having been the first who gave a decided impulse to the new direction of Art. Of the particulars of his life nothing more is known than that (as Vasari informs us) he was originally named Tommaso, or Maso, and that the reproachful "*accio*" was added from his total neglect of all the external relations of life, in his exclusive devotion to Art.—*The Schools of Painting in Italy*, translated from the German of Kugler, by a Lady; ed. Eastlake, Book iv. ch. 1.

**377.** There has been good material in the Gothic languages for a development of this kind, but it has not been matured in our family as in the Romance languages, and especially in Italian. The Gothic dialects in which the diminutives are most

striking are the Scottish and the Alemannian, that is, the High Dutch of the German cantons of Switzerland. The great language in which it has been best cultivated is the German, where an excellent use is made of *-chen* (374) and *-lein*, as *Mädchen*, *Fräulein*. In the Swiss dialects *-lein*, or rather *-li*, is so general as to be merely conventional; the *-chen* exists in English and Scotch in a few expiring embers. These are in the form of *-kin*, as *bodkin*, *gherkin*, *lambkin*, *mannikin*, *pipkin*, but the diminutival sense is mostly effete. An instance of the employment of this form in the service of contempt, was when Pope conceived his *sooterkins*—

‘Fruits of dull heat and sooterkins of wit.’

*The Dunciad*, Book i.

Or *-kie*, *-kinie*, as in the following quotation:—

‘A form of expression which has been a great favourite in Scotland, in my recollection, has much gone out of practice—I mean the frequent use of diminutives, generally adopted either as terms of endearment or of contempt. Thus, it was very common to speak of a person whom you meant rather to undervalue, as a *mannie*, a *bodie*, a *bit bodie*, or a *wee bit mannie*. The bailie in *Rob Roy*, when he intended to represent his party as persons of no importance, used the expression “We are bits o’ Glasgow bodies.” In a popular child’s song, we have the endearing expression, “My wee bit laddie.” We have known the series of diminutives, as applied to the canine race, very rich in diminution. There is—1. A dog; 2. A doggie; 3. A bit doggie; 4. A wee bit doggie; and even 5. A wee bit doggiekie. A correspondent has supplied me with a diminutive, which is of a more extravagant degree of attenuation than any I ever met with. It is this—“A peerie wee bit o’ a manikinie.” . . . . It is recorded in the family that Mrs. Mure, on receiving from David Hume on his deathbed, the copy of his *History*, which is still in the library of Caldwell, thanked him very warmly, and added, in her native dialect, which she and the historian spoke in great purity, “O David, that’s a book ye may weel be proud o’, but before ye dee ye should burn a’ your wee bukie.”—E. B. Ramsay, *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character*, ch. v.

The diminutives at present most active in English are the French forms *-et*, *-ette*, *-let*.

To the examples given above, 336, may here be added *gallet*, *gibbet*, *giblet*, *gimlet*, *lancet*, *tablet*.

*gabled.*

'Rising against the screen . . . stood an old monument of carved wood, once brilliantly painted . . . It lifted its *gabled*, carved to look like a canopy, till its apex was on a level with the book-board on the front of the organ-loft;—' George MacDonald, *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, ch. ii.

We also use the Scotch diminutival *-ie*, often written *-y*, but with us it hardly exists beyond the region of childish talk, as *auntie*, *Georgy*, *Johnny*.

The Saxon *-ling*, as in *duckling*, *gosling*, seems reviving: in 'Ginx's Baby,' a small book that has had a great run, we find *changeling*, *foundling*, *nurseling*, *strangeling*, *suckling*, *youngling*.

It is (probably) as a compensation for our poverty in emotional expressions that we turn with such avidity to slang and dialectic substantives.

As regards the influence of the emotions on the forms of words, the Italian and the English stand at opposite poles:

'A *far niente* life promotes the graces;  
They pass from dreamy bliss to wakeful glee,  
And in their bearing, and their speech, one traces  
A breadth of grace and depth of courtesy  
That are not found in more inclement places;  
Their clime and tongue are much in harmony:  
The cockney met in Middlesex or Surrey,  
Is often cold, and always in a hurry.'

Frederick Locker, *London Lyrics*, 'The Invitation to Rome.'

*Inflection of Substantives.*

378. Flexion is used to express the Number, the Case and the Gender of substantives. The Saxon substantive had a full assortment of flexion—three cases in the singular, and as many in the plural.

|        | SINGULAR.                       |  | PLURAL.                          |
|--------|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Nom. } | <i>smið</i> , <i>smith</i>      |  | <i>smiðas</i> , <i>smiths</i>    |
| Acc. } |                                 |  |                                  |
| Gen.   | <i>smiðes</i> <i>of a smith</i> |  | <i>smiða</i> , <i>of smiths</i>  |
| Dat.   | <i>smiðe</i> <i>to a smith</i>  |  | <i>smiðum</i> , <i>to smiths</i> |

The Saxon adjective was of still more varied flexibility, at least in the singular number, where each gender had its own set of inflections. Of all this there remains but little. The modern adjective has no inflection whatever; and that of the substantive is reduced to the letter *s* for the expression of the genitive singular, and the same letter for the formation of the plural.

This old plural *s* is one of the points by which our nearness to the Mæso-Gothic is indicated. In that dialect the *s* plural has a very much larger incidence than in Anglo-Saxon. In fact it applies to all the masculine and feminine substantives of the dialect. In the Old- and Middle-High German it is untraceable. In the Scandinavian dialects it is represented by *r*. In the Old-Saxon alone (besides the Mæso-Gothic) do we find the plural *s*: there it holds much the same sort of place as in Anglo-Saxon. The range of this plural was very limited in Saxon: out of the nine declensions made by Rask, it occupies only one.

This form is indebted to French influence for its place in English. There was in Saxon a group of masculine nouns which made its plural in *-as*. Thus:—

| SINGULAR. |               | PLURAL.  |
|-----------|---------------|----------|
| ende,     | <i>end</i>    | endas    |
| dæg,      | <i>day</i>    | dagas    |
| cýning,   | <i>king</i>   | cýningas |
| weg,      | <i>way</i>    | wegas    |
| stæf,     | <i>letter</i> | stafas   |

**379.** But the really dominant pluralform in Saxon times was that in *-an*, which later was written *-en* and *-yn*. Out of Rask's nine declensions three formed their plurals thus, one for each gender. Of these we only retain some relics, as *oxen*, *eyne*, which latter is still occasionally used in poetry. In Chaucer's time it was spelt *eyen*, which comes nearer to the Saxon *eagan*. Thus, in the description of the Monk—

‘His eyen stepe and rollyng in his hed.’

In the Northern dialect it appeared as *ene*, in modern Scotch written *een*.

‘Grete ene and gray, with a grym loke.’

*Troy Book*, 3821.

380. We have indeed other plurals in *-en*; but they are younger than Saxon times. They are a memorial of the fact that this form was dominant throughout the country during the transition period; and they indicate that, had it not been for a stronger external influence, the plural *-en* would have become as general in modern English as it is in modern German. Such is the form *shoon*, shoes, still extant in spoken Scotch; also within the horizon of our English reading, if not of our speaking or writing.

‘We will not leaue one Lord, one Gentleman :  
Spare none, but such as go in clouted shoon.’

2 *Henry VI*, iv. 2. 178.

Such are *brethren*, *children*, *housen* (Gloucestershire and Suffolk), *hosen*. The latter word is in our Bible, Daniel iii. 21. Spenser has *fone*, meaning *foes*, *Faery Queene*, iii. 3. 33. Mr. Barnes’s Poems in the Dorset Dialect supply others, as *cheesen*, *furzen*.

Of these, *brethren* and *children*, are cumulate plurals. They have added the *-en* plural-form on to an elder plural; for *brether* and *childer* were plurals of brother and child. The form *sisteryn* was common enough in the fifteenth century, as ‘bretheryn and sisteryn.’ The form *sistren* is said to be in full use in America, in the phraseology of the meeting-house, as the counterpart of *brethren*. Another kind of cumulation sometimes takes place. The modern *s* gets added to its old rival *n*. In the passage just quoted from 2 *Henry VI*, the First and Second Folios have *shoon*, the Third has *shoon*, and the Fourth has *shoons*! With this may

be classed the Norfolk boy-expression for birds' nests, which is *buds' nesens*.

It was by the French influence, leading the van of education for three centuries, that the plural in *s*, which held so small a place in Saxon grammar, became the universal law of English grammar.

381. Other pluralforms deserve a word of notice. The plurals *feet*, *geese*, *men*, *teeth*, made by internal vowel-change from *foot*, *goose*, *man*, *tooth*; the forms *lice*, *mice*, mere frenchified orthographies of the Saxon plurals *lys* from singular *lus*, and *mys* from singular *mus*,—are relics of an ancient class never numerous within recorded knowledge, but which has been reduced by the domination of the prevalent forms. So *boc* had for its plural *bec*, but now it is *books*. In the transition period the plural of *goat* appears as *gayle* and *geet*, but now it is *goats*. Here also we get cumulate examples. The plural of *cu*, cow, was once *cy*, a form which survives in the Scotch *kye*; but it has received the superadded *n*, and has become *kine*. The Scottish *breeks* is a cumulate example, the modern *s* being imposed upon the old strong plural; for in Saxon it was singular *BRÔC*, plural *BRÊC*. On the other hand, *chicken*, which has been taken for a plural in *n*, is really a singular; and *chickens* its simple plural. Accordingly *chick* is a young and deductive singular, derived from the imaginary plural *chicken*; much as *pea* was deduced from *pease*, 183.

382. There was a group of neuters, forming one of Rask's declensions, which in the plural nominative and accusative was flexionless. Such were *leaf*, *king*, *wif*, *word*, and many others, of which the plural was the same as the singular; not as now, *leaves*, *things*, *wives*, *words*. The feature has survived in two words, which are still of one form for singular and plural, viz. *sheep* and *deer*. To these might be added *swine*, only that it seems now to be accepted as a



plural form, while *sow* and the upstart *pig* fill the office of the singular.

Those words which we have adopted from Latin or Greek in the singular nominative unaltered, have usually been pluralised according to Greek and Latin grammar. Thus the plural of phenomenon is *phenomena*, of oasis *oases*, of terminus *termini*, of fungus *fungi*. But occasionally we see the plurals in English form, as when Dr. Badham entitles his book, not *Edible Fungi*, but *Esculent Funguses*, and uses this plural all through it, as

‘No country is perhaps richer in esculent Funguses than our own; we have upwards of thirty species abounding in our woods.’—(p. xiii.)

Some few substantives which we have made out of Latin words unaltered, are not nouns in that language, and have no Latin plurality. These we have pluralised with English *s*, as *items*, *interests*.

‘Benevolent subscribers too seldom examine the items of a report.’—*Ginx's Baby*, ix.

### *Gender of Substantives.*

383. The ancient and native form of the noun feminine was in *-en*, as *God*, *Deus*; *gyden*, *dea*: *wealh*, *servus*; *wylen* *serva*, *ancilla*: *ðegen*, *minister*; *þynen*, *ministra*.

But this form has been supplanted and so nearly extinguished that it is difficult to find an extant specimen to serve for an illustration. Beyond sporting circles, not one person in a thousand is aware that *vixen* is the feminine of *fox*. In general speech it is only known as a stigma for the character of a shrewish woman. Yet this is the history of *vixen*; and it is a very well preserved form, having enjoyed the shelter of a technical position. Not only is there the *-en* termination, but also the thinning of the masculine vowel, as in the Saxon examples above. So also in German *Fuchs*, *Füchsin*.

An example which maintained itself long after the extinction of its congeners was *mynchyn*, the feminine of monk, Saxon *munuc*. At the time of the suppression of the religious houses Dr. London wrote as follows from Godstow to Lord Crumwell, April 17, 1535 :—

‘ And if the kings grace’s pleasur be, notwithstanding her (the lady abbess’s) desyer for suche considerations as movith hys grace for the reformation of suche abuses, to tak the howse by surrendyr, then I besek yo<sup>r</sup> lordeshipp to admytt me an humble sutar for my lady and herre sisters, and the late Abbasse, and suche as haue covent seales for lyvings in that howse, that they may be favorably orderyd, specially my lady wich lately payd herre fyrst fruyts and was indaungeryd therfor unto herre frynds. Many of the mynchyns be also agyd, and as I perceyve few of the other haue any frynds, wherefor I besek yo<sup>r</sup> lordeschipp to be gude lord unto them.’

384. That which has superseded the Saxon feminine is the French termination *-ess*, as *countess*, *duchess*, *empress*, *giantess*, *goddess*, *governess*, *laundress*, *marchioness*, *princess*, *sempstress*, *songstress*.

*Governess* is not invariably applicable as the feminine of *governor*. There are considerations which override grammar, as our practice of common prayer witnesses. Yet I remember to have heard ‘Queen and Governess’ in church. Grammar has brought this class of cases under another rule which she has made, namely this, that the masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine. And on this ground it would have been quite admissible, *majestatis causâ*, to have had ‘founder’ in the following passage where *foundress* appears.

‘ The central plains of Australia, the untrodden jungles of Borneo, or the still vacant spaces in our maps of Africa, alone now on the globe’s surface represent districts as unknown and mysterious as the north-east angle of Ireland in the reign of the great foundress of the modern British Empire.’—J. A. Froude, *Reign of Elizabeth* ; *History*, vol. x. p. 554.

Of this feminine form many examples now obsolete are found in books :—*architectress*, *buildress*, *captainess*, *daunceress*,

*flatteress, intrudress, knightess, neighbouress, pedleress, soverainness, thrallless, vengeress, waileress*<sup>1</sup>.

In Doncaster the feminine of Alderman is *Aldress* or *Aldresse*<sup>2</sup>.

We can say *lioness* and *tigress*, but not *elephantess* nor *cameless*.

'The Lion did teare in pieces enough for his whelpes, and strangled for his Lionesses.'—Nahum ii. 12.

In fact the application of this form has been so narrowed, that we cannot properly be said to have a feminine formative at all. A limited number of privileged formatives there are, but not a free feminine formative. We cannot make new feminines for every emergency, as the Germans can with their *-inn*. However to be accounted for, it is a great disadvantage.

As an illustration that we cannot make a feminine substantive to meet a new occasion, I instance the following. There is a place in the Psalms where our word 'preachers' is in the original a feminine form. Dr. Marsh, in a collection of notes from Scripture concerning the ministry of women, brings in this passage, but he can only array his Hebrew fact in an English dress by an ungainly compound:—

'Psalm lxxviii. 11 reads in the original thus:—"The Lord gave the word, great was the company of women-publishers."'—*Memoir of the Rev. William Marsh, D.D.*, by his Daughter (1867), p. 398.

**385.** Examples like *sempstress*, *songstress*, remind us that there was a Saxon feminine termination *estre*, whereof a trace is still visible in those words between the root and

<sup>1</sup> An extensive list may be seen in Dr. Trench's *English Past and Present*, seventh ed. (1870), p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Jackson's *History of Doncaster Church*, folio 1855, plate ix.; where we see next to the pew of the Mayor and Aldermen one that is marked as 'Aldresses' Pew.' The expression occurs in other parts of the same work.

the termination. This feminine is still extant in *spinner*, *spinster*.

But we cannot recognise the termination *-ster* as being, or as having been at some time past, a feminine formative in every instance. Not only does the present use of such old words as *Baxter*, *huckster*, *maltster*, *songster*, *Webster*, not to urge the more recent *oldster*, *youngster*, *roadster*, make it hard to prove them all feminines, but even if we push our enquiries further back, we nowhere find the group clearly defined as such, except in modern Dutch. There was in Anglo-Saxon *bæcere* and *bæcistre*, and yet Pharaoh's baker in Genesis xl. is *bæcistre*. Grimm has conjectured that these nouns in *-estre* are all that is left of an older pair of declensions, whereof one was masculine in *-estra*, the other feminine in *-estre*. A fine historical example is

*deemster*.

'The isle [of Man] is divided into "sheddings" (German *Scheidungen*, boundaries or separations). The judges are called "deemsters," that is, doomsters, or pronouncers of judgment. The title of the king is "our doughtful<sup>1</sup> Lord." The place of proclaiming the law is the "Tinwald."—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1833.

*Concluding Observation.*

**386.** If from this point we cast a look back over the verbs and substantives, we perceive a certain quietude in the former, and a corresponding energy in the latter. In making this remark I am naturally taking as my standard of comparison those languages with which the philological student is most likely to be equipped. The remark will hold good, as against the Latin language, still more so as against the Greek, and most of all as against the Hebrew. In all of these languages, but especially in the latter, the mental

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<sup>1</sup> I. e. doughty, tüchtig.

activity of the nation is gathered up and concentrated in the verb. This is displayed by the immense superiority of the verb over the substantive in its attractive power of sympathy, and its expressive stores of variability. Time has been when this was partially true of our ancestral verb in the Gothic family. But it is no more so. It certainly is not so in our own insular branch. During the modern period, which dates from the fourteenth century, in which we have the movements of the language historically before us, it is equally remarkable on the one hand how little our verb has done to extend its compass, and on the other hand how much the substantive has done to increase its variability. The quotations of this section are a sufficient proof that some of the strongest lineaments of character in the English language are now and have long been finding their chosen seat of expression in our substantives. But while this remark is made here at the close of the substantives, and with a particular application to them, I would add that it applies in a general way to the whole nounal group, and that its structural significance will become apparent in the third division of the chapter on Syntax.

## II. OF THE ADJECTIVE.

**387.** The adjective, or word fit for attachment, is a word which presupposes a substantive, and is for this reason essentially relative and secondary. This inward nature of adjectives is beautifully expressed in Greek and Latin by the outward conformation of their physical aspect. Whereas the bulk of the Latin substantives are in *-us* or *-a* or *-um*, and the bulk of the Greek substantives are in *-os* or *-η* or *-ον*, their adjectives are, for the most part, not in some

one, but in all the three forms, as becomes those whose business it is to agree with their consorts in gender, number, and case. They are furnished with a threefold power of modification, in consideration of their dependent, relative and secondary nature. Such is the adjective as against the substantive. Both are presentive words; but the substantive is the primary, and the adjective is the secondary presentive word.

But what is the adjective as against the verb? It is plain that both of them are, as towards the substantive, secondary words. There is no verb without a subject; and that subject is a substantive. The verb and adjective alike have their very nature based upon the pre-supposition of the substantive. Therefore the verb and the adjective are both secondary words. They differ only in the force and energy of their action. In the beginning of the last section verbs were compared to flame, while substantives were only inflammable stuff. We may fitly continue this metaphor, and say that adjectives are glowing embers. They not only give warmth, and tell of a flame that has been, but they also retain the power of future activity. If I say 'good man,' it is not asserted, but it is presented to thought that the man 'is good.' If I say 'live dog,' it is contemplated as predicable, though not predicated, that the dog 'lives.' Thus the adjective is nothing more nor less than a dormant verb—a verb in a state of quiescence. And by way of endeavouring to indicate the position which they both hold in the general economy of language, we will designate them as Secondary Presentives.

**388.** We begin our catalogue of English adjectives with a sample of those whose history belongs to an elder stage—those which were already ancient at the opening of the present era of our language. Such are:—*bare, bright, dear,*

*fair, free, fresh, full, good, gray, great, green, hale, hard, high, late, lief, light, like, long, mild, much, new, nigh, old, quick, rathe, red, rich, ripe, rough, sharp, short, sick, small, sooth, stark, strong, swart, sweet, swift, true, while, worth, yare, young.*

One of these has been a chief heir-loom from Saxon times, and has made a figure in all stages of the national story. I suppose that no other Saxon adjective is comparable for the length and variety of its career to the word *free*. Originally meaning *lordly, noble, gentle* (78), it has with each change of the national aim so changed its usage as still to take a prominent place. In the growth of the municipal bodies the privileged members were designated *free-men*; in the constitutional struggles it managed to represent the idea of liberty; and in these latter days, when social equality is the universal pretension, it signifies the manners thereon attendant in the modern coupling, 'free and easy.'

The earliest sense may be seen as late as Shakspeare:—

'*Aia. I thanke thee, Hector:  
Thou art too gentle, and too free a man.*'

*Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 139.

Words of obscure origin, which emerged in the transition period, seem to claim place here: such a word was the adjective *bad*.

The Saxon formatives are those in *-l, -m, -n, -r, and -sh*; those in *-y, -ing, -ed, -ly, -some, -ward, -full, -less*.

389. In *-l, -el, or -le*:—*brittle, evil, fickle, idle, little, mickle, middle, nimble, stickle* (= steep, still used about Dartmoor, and entering into the word *stickleback*, and the local name Stickle-path, near Oakhampton), *tickle*.

A fine local example of *brittle*, in the form of *brutel*, occurs in a legend carved on an oak cloth-bat in the collection of the Rev. G. W. Braikenridge, at Clevedon. It

may have been a wedding-gift, and it is a remarkably interesting object, the more so as it is dated. The inscription is :—

ROS. DAVESON. 1664. IF . YOV . LOVE . ME . LEND . ME . NOT  
VNTO . A . SLLET . FOR . I . VERY . BRVTEL . WOOD.

To these should be added *brindle*; for although we have cast it into other forms, as *brinded* (Milton), or the more common *brindled*, yet the pure word still lives in New England, where they talk of a ‘brindle yearling,’ or, as I believe it is spoken, ‘brindle yerlin.’

The fact is, we are no longer conscious that this termination makes an adjective: it is no longer in productive operation. This is the reason why *brindle* has been converted into *brindled*, because all men know that the termination *-ed* signifies the possession of a quality, but they do not know that *-le* has this signification. In the same manner we now say *new-fangled*, but the original word is *new fangil* or *new fangel*, as in the *Babees Book*, p. 9, where the letter *n* is exemplified by the following line of *n*-initials :—

‘To Noyous, ne to Nyce, ne to Newfangill.’

(Not to be) too pressing, nor too fastidious, nor too eager for novelty.

*ticle, tickle* (above, 183).

‘So ticle be the termes of mortall state.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 4. 28.

‘The Earl of Murray standing in so tickle terms in Scotland.’—Earl of Pembroke, 1569; quoted by J. A. Froude, *History of England*, ix. 427.

As *brindle* has been altered into *brindled*, so *tickle* into *ticklish*.



390. In *-m*. These have never been numerous within historical times. In Saxon there was *earm* = poor, and *rum* = wide, the former of which is extinct, and the latter altered to *roomy*. The only extant adjectives that I can quote in this class are *grim*, *warm*.

There is a fine old poetic word *brim*, with much the same variety of meaning as the modern *brave*:—

‘She was brim as any bear.’

*Prim* is obscure: Richardson says it is short for *primitive*. I would rather believe it to be a northern form of *brim*.

391. In *-n*, or *-en*. Here we are much richer: *elmen*, *even*, *fain*, *golden*, *heathen*, *hempen*, *leaden*, *linen*, *oaten*, *olden*, *open*, *stern*, *threaden*, *tinnen*, *treen* (Spenser, *Faery Queene*, i. 2. 39), *wooden*, *woollen*. Milton has *coral-paven* and *azurn*.

This class of adjectives cannot be separated by any decisive line from the participial forms, such as *drunken*, *shrunk*.

*oaten*.

‘Nought tooke I with me but mine oaten quill.’

*Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, 194.

*wooden*.

‘Wooden wals.’ *The Faery Queene*, i. 2. 42.

*elmen*.

‘When the elmen tree leaf is as big as a farding,  
It’s time to sow kidney beans in the garding;  
When the elmen tree leaf is as big as a penny,  
You must sow your beans if you mean to have eny,’

*Popular Rhyme*.

*hempen*.

‘Slow are the steeds that through Germania’s roads  
With hempen rein the slumbering post-boy goads.’

Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin, *The Rovers*, 1798.

Tennyson has *cedarn*.

'Right to the carven cedarn doors.'

*Recollections of the Arabian Nights.*

This formative has been partially supplanted by the Latin *-ian*. Thus our ancestors before the revival of letters never said Christian but *Christen*: 'A Christen man.'

Of local names this form is found in *Furzen Leaze*, between Cirencester and Kemble. We may notice also this formative in the geological designation of the 'Wealden beds.'

There has been a good deal of discussion as to whether we should write Whitsun Day or Whit Sunday. On the one side there is the testimony of Whit Monday and Whit Tuesday pointing in the one direction, and on the other hand that of Whitsun Tide and Whitsun Week pointing in the opposite direction. As I understand it, the two things come to one, the Whitsun being now adjectival, only preserving the *u* by traditional fidelity: Whitsun Tide I consider as equal to Whitsen Tide.

**392.** In **-r** or **-er**. Examples:—*clever*, *slipper* (the elder form for the modern *slippery*), *wicker*. *Slipper* is still the common word in Devonshire, where they say, 'It's very slipper along the roads to-day.' A good illustration is afforded by the following line from Surrey, the Elizabethan poet:—

'Slipper in sliding as is an eeles tail.'

According to Dr. Johnson, *clever* was a cant or slang word in his time.

**393.** In **-sh**, or by disguise **-ch**, representing the Anglo-Saxon adjective in **-isc**.

Examples:—*apish*, *boorish*, *churlish*, *foolish*, *outlandish*, *peevish*, *thievish*, *upish*, *waspish*.

This form has held a foremost position, and more than

any other it may be called the old national adjective, but now less honourably employed than once it was. It is the form of the adjective 'English' itself, and generally of our adjectives by which we designate nationalities:—*Welsh, Irish, Scottish, French, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Spanish, Turkish, Flemish, Polish*. In a few cases, however, we have admitted the Latin *-anus*, as *Roman, Italian, Russian, German*. Here the Germans, truer to old habit, still say *Römisſch, Italieniſch, Ruſſiſch, Deutſch*. The antiquity of this form is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact that it is the prevalent 'gentile' adjective with all the nations of our family. The Germans call themselves *Deutſch*, the Danes *Dansk*, the Norwegians *Norsk*, the Swedes *Svensk*, and the Icelanders *Isländsk*. Besides the recognised nations there is many an obscure community that asserts its gentility by setting up an *-ish* of its own. A friend, fresh from travel, writes that when he arrived at the Tyrolese valley which is called *Gröden Thal*, he asked whether they spoke *Italieniſch* or *Deutſch* there? He was answered that they spoke *Grödeniſch*. And as an illustration how green and vigorous the form is in German to this day, we may observe it combining with some of the most modern classical innovations, and making adjectives like *metaphoriſch, metaphyſiſch, methodiſch*, where we employ a French termination, and say *metaphorical, metaphysical, methodical*. Mr. Heard would make a form 'soulish' to render the *ψυχικός* of the New Testament, and to stand for a contrast to spiritual, like *ſeeliſch* in German. He thinks it would take root as *selfish* has done:—

'Thus selfish, now so thoroughly naturalised in English, was a thorough barbarism two centuries ago. . . Selfish was used by the Scotch covenanters for self-seeking, as contrasted with seeking God.'—*The Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 83, note.

In England the successive tides of foreign influence drove

back this and many other forms. The Latin *-an* was another ready substitute for *-ish*. Miles Coverdale, 1535, in Daniel i. 4, has 'and to lerne for to speake Caldeish'—a form that will be sought in vain in our present Bible.

*elvisch* = elf-like, uncanny, shy.

'He semeth elvisch by his countenaunce,  
For unto no wight doth he daliaunce.'

*Prologe to Sire Thopas.*

*churlish*.

'Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,  
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.'

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Traveller*.

This termination is also put to adjectives, with a diluting effect, as *longish*, *sweetish*, *ticklish*. See 88.

394. In *-y* or *-ey*, representing the Saxon adjective in *g*, as *æmtig*, empty.

Examples:—*bloody*, *burly*, *corny*, Chaucer, Milton, *dainty*, Spectator, 354, *dirty*, *doughty*, *dusty*, *fatty*, *flighty*, *fusty*, *filthy*, *flowery*, *foody*, *gouty*, *haughty*, *heady*, *heartly*, *inky*, *jaunty*, *leafy*, Mark xi. Contents, *lusty*, *mealy*, *mighty*, *milky*, *misty*, *moody*, *murky*, *musty*, *nasty*, *noisy*, *oily*, *plashy*, *pretty*, *ready*, *reedy*, *rusty*, *saucy*, *silky*, *silly*, *speedy*, *steady*, *sturdy*, *sulky*, *trusty*, *weedy*.

The word *silly* has the appearance of belonging to another group, namely, those in *-ly*; but the Saxon *sæl-ig* and the transition form *seely* were the præcursors of the form *silly*, which appears as early as Spenser:—

'She wist not, silly Mayd, what she did aile.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 2. 2.

There has been a certain amount of assimilation from French forms, as *hardy*, which is the French *hardi*. Espe-

cially has this adjectival form been confused with the French in *-if*, Latin *-ivus*, as *tardy* from French *tardif*; *jolly* from the Old French *jolif*. In the case of *caitiff*, however, we have preserved this French *f* very emphatically.

Chaucer uses *jolif*; but in Spenser it is *jolly*:—

‘The first of them by name Gardanté hight,  
A jolly person and of comely vew.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. i. 45.

Reversely also we find genuine members of this class written as if they belonged to French adjectives in *-if*. Thus we find in the texts of Chaucer the native word *guilty* written *giltif* and *gultyf*.

This formative is still in the highest state of activity. There is more freedom, for example, about making new adjectives in *-y* than in *-ish*.

Illustrations:—

*corny*.

‘Now have I dronk a draught of corny ale.’

*Canterbury Tales*, 13871.

*foody*.

‘Who brought them to the sable fleet from Ida’s foody leas.’

Chapman, *Iliad*, xi. 104.

*plashy*.

‘All but yon-widow’d, solitary thing,  
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring.’

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*.

*bloomy, lawny, shadowy*.

‘Winding among the lawny islands fair,  
Whose bloomy forests starred the shadowy deep.’

Shelley, *Revolt of Islam*, Canto i. 51.

*buttony.*

‘That buttony boy sprang up and down from the box.’—Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*.

*plastery, rubbishy.*

‘St. Peter’s disappoints me; the stone of which it is made is a poor plastery material; and indeed Rome in general might be called a rubbishy place.’—Arthur H. Clough.

*Pretty* is from the same French word as *proud*, although its sense is not identical with *proudie*. That famous old French word *prud*, which forms part of the well-known *prud’hommes*, was one of the earliest of the French words that made themselves quite at home among us. Already in one of the later Saxon Chronicles *prut* is substituted for the native word *ranc*, as a fine word (I suppose) for a vulgar one. When *prut* was first naturalised it meant grand, splendid, proud, magnificent, insolent. From this *prut*, by our Saxon grammatical procedure, we made an abstract noun, *prit* or *pritte*, which signified grandeur, splendour, pride, magnificence, insolence. The following lines are from a metrical life of St. Chad:—

‘Al a vote he wende aboute · ne kepte he nan pritte;  
Riche man þei he were imad · he told þer of litte.’

*All afoot. he went about, he kept no dignity;  
Rich man though he was made, shall count thereof made be.*

This form is sometimes found in modern names of places, as *Bushy Park*.

395. In *-ing*, as

..  
*wilding.*

‘O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,  
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave.’

Sir Walter Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, Canto iv. init.

‘And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers.’

Alfred Tennyson, *Enid*, p. 17.

396. In -ed :—*gifted, ill-conditioned, landed, learned, leisured, monied, talented, wicked, wretched.*

*weaponed.*

'& hee had beene weaponed as well as I,  
he had beene worth both thee & mee.'

*Eger and Grime, 1039.*

As we can draw no decisive line between participles in -*en* and adjectives in the same termination, so neither can we distinctly sever between adjectives and participles in -*ed*. There are many which everybody would call adjectives, and many which everybody would agree to call participles. The distinction turns upon this,—whether they can or cannot be derived from a verb. This is, in fact, a participial adjective which has never passed through the regular verbal process to that position; and therefore such words often appear of abrupt introduction, and are provocative of opposition. This has been the case with the word

*talented.*

'Talented, first used by Lady Morgan, is another instance of a word adopted in spite of the purists, and within our memory.'—J. B. Heard, *The Tripartite Nature of Man*, p. 83, note.

John Sterling, writing to Mr. Carlyle in 1835, criticised his use of the word *talented*, which he called 'a mere newspaper and hustings word, invented, I believe, by O'Connell.'—*Life of John Sterling*, Part II. ch. ii.

*leisured.*

'Was it true that the legislative Chambers which were paid performed their duties more laboriously and conscientiously than the British House of Commons? It was admitted in other countries that that House stood at the head of the representative assemblies of the world. (Cheers.) What other assembly was there that attempted to transact such an amount of business? (Hear.) What assembly was there whose members sacrificed more of

personal convenience and of health in the discharge of its duties? (Hear.) The condition of this country was peculiar. There was a vast leisured class to which there was nothing parallel on the face of the earth.'—House of Commons, April 5, 1870.

**397.** Next comes a form which we mention only to deplore. This is the old Saxon adjectival form *-əht* or *-iht*, as *staniht*, stony. Thus, in *Cod. Dipl.* 620, 'ondlong brôces on ðone stānihtan ford,'—along the brook to the stony ford. This form is preserved in German, as *bergicht*, hilly; *bornicht*, thorny; *eckicht*, angular; *grasicht*, grassy; *steinicht*, stony; and it makes one of the dainties of German poetry.

Und Pan beschützt die silberwollichten Heerden

*And Pan protects the flocks with silvery fleeces.*

Wieland, *Die Grazien*, Bk. I.

Und Rosen zu flechten ins lockichte Haar.

*And roses to wreath in his goldilock hair.* *Id.* Bk. VI.

**398.** In *-ly* for *-like*. In Saxon this formative was *-lic*, which was at the same time a noun, meaning body, as it still is in German, *Leich*. The transition from the substantival sense of body to the symbolic expression of the idea of similarity, provokes a comparison with a transition in the Hebrew, from the word for bone and body, which is *עצם*, to the pronominal sense of *very* or *same*.

Examples:—*childly* Tennyson, *cleanly*, *godly*, *goodly*, *likely*, *steelly*, *unmannerly*, *rascally*.

*ugly*.

'What follye is thys,  
to kepe wyth daunger,  
A greate mastyfe dogge  
and a foule ouglye beare?  
And to thys onelye ende,  
to se them two fyght,  
Wyth terrible tearynge,  
A full ouglye syght.'

Robert Crowley, *Epigrams* (1550), 'Of Bearbaytynge.'



*steelly.*

'Steel through opposing plates the magnet draws,  
And steelly atoms culls from dust and straws.'—Crabbe.

This form has been checked in its expansion as an adjective by its general employment for adverbial purposes. Often it happens when we come across it in our elder literature adjectively used, we need a moment's reflection to put us in the train of thought for understanding it. In the following passage from Chaucer's *Boethius*, the adjective *wepely*, in the sense of pathetic, would give most readers a check. The passage is here printed with its marginal summary, as a sample of the work of the Early English Text Society:—

'Blisful is þat man þat may seen the clere welle of good.  
blisful is he þat may vnbynde hym fro þe bonde of heuy  
erþe. ¶ þe poete of trace [Orpheus] þat somtyme hadde  
ryst greet sorowe for the deef of hys wijf. aftir þat he  
hadde maked by hys wepely songes þe wodes meueable to  
rennen, and hadde ymaked þe ryueres to stonden stille.  
and maked þe hertys and hyndes to ioignen dredles hir  
sides to cruel lyouns to herkene his songe.' (p. 106.)

'Happy is he that  
can see the lucid  
spring of truth!  
Happy the man that  
hath freed himself  
from terrestrial  
chains! The Thra-  
cian poet, con-  
sumed with grief for  
the loss of his wife,  
sought relief from  
music. His mourn-  
ful songs drew the  
woods along; the  
rolling rivers ceased  
to flow; the savage  
beasts became heed-  
less of their prey.'

In the adjective *likely* we have the curious phenomenon of the altered form of a word coming to act as a formative to a better preserved form of itself; the first and last syllables of the word being originally the same word, *lic*.

399. In *-some*:—*adventuresome, darksome, gladsome, hand-  
some, irksome, quarrelsome, troublesome, wholesome, winsome.*

This is the German *=sam*, as *langsam*. It looks in spelling as if this termination belonged to our pronoun *some*, but it is really connected with a different pronoun, namely *same*.

*adventuresome.*

'And now at once, adventuresome, I send  
My herald thought into a wilderness.'

John Keats, *Endymion*.

*darksome.*

'Darksome nicht comes down.' Robert Burns.

The word *buxom* belongs here. This might not be apparent at first sight. It does not look like one of the adjectives in *-some*; but it is so, being the analogue of the German *biegsam*, ready to *bow* or comply.

'Great Neptune stoode amazed at their sight,  
Whiles on his broad rownd backe they softly slid,  
And eke him selfe mournd at their mournful plight,  
Yet wist not what their wailing meant; yet did,  
For great compassion of their sorow, bid  
His mighty waters to them buxome bee.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 4. 32.

400. In-ward, as *downward*, *froward*, *homeward*, *inward*, *leeward*, *outward*, *toward*, *untoward*, *upward*, *wayward*, *woolward*.

There was also an old adjective *lateward*, as we learn from the following entry in Randle Cotgrave: 'Arrerailles. Lateward seed.'—*Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, 1611.

*toward, untoward.*

'Which when his Palmer saw, he gan to feare  
His toward perill and untoward blame,  
Which by that new rencounter he should neare;  
For death sate on the point of that enchanted speare.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 1. 9.

*wayward.*

'Our wayward intellect, the more we learn  
Of nature, overlooks her author more.'

William Cowper, *The Task*, Bk. iii.

*leeward.*

'The vain distress-gun, from a leeward shore,  
Repeated—heard, and heard no more.'

William Wordsworth, *On the Power of Sound*.

In this vocable *ward* we have to notice some very appreciable relics of an ancient verbal habit. It represents the Saxon verb *WEORÐAN*, to become. Not that it is derived therefrom, but is rather a branchlet of the same stock at an earlier stage. It has, even down to our own time, retained traces of an old verbal power, so that it seems now and then to be equivalent not merely to the Latin preposition *versus*, but also to have the verb *vertere* in it, or at least the participle *versus*, -a, -um. In Chaucer's *Prologue*, 396, it is said of the hardy shipman:—

'fful manye a drauht of weyn hadde he i-drawe  
ffrom Burdeux ward, whil that the chapman slep.'

That is to say, he had drawn many a draught of wine out of the sleeping chapman's casks, while on the voyage from Bordeaux. So that *ward* is equivalent to voyaging, or coming, or being on the voyage.

Something of the same verbality will be perceived in the *homeward* of the following quotations:—

'But when now the lords and dames  
And people, from the high door streaming, brake  
Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,  
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he moved apart,  
Drew near, and,' &c. Alfred Tennyson, *Elaine*, ad finem.

'No loving step, to meet him homeward, flew;'

*The New Timon, a Romance of London* (1846).

401. We might go on to enumerate the adjectives in -full and -less, as *fruitful*, *thankful*, *fruitless*, *thankless*; but here we are already edging the border that separates

our present subject from the adjectival compounds. We therefore close the Saxon division with a mention of those adjectives which are formed by reduplication. Such are *shilly-shally*, *ship-shape*, *wishy-washy*.

‘A weak, wishy-washy man, who had hardly any mind of his own.’—Anthony Trollope, *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, ch. vii.

Of the French adjectives a few are formless, as *blank*, *brave*, *frank*.

402. Coming now to the French forms, the first that claims our notice is the greatly used **-able**, **-ible**.

Some of our commonest adjectives are of this type.

Examples:—*acceptable*, *accessible*, *accountable*, *agreeable*, *appreciable*, *approachable*, *available*, *audible*, *comfortable*, *contemptible*, *desirable*, *estimable*, *forcible*, *irrepressible*, *justifiable*, *lamentable*, *manageable*, *marketable*, *notable*, *noticeable*, *peaceable*, *practicable*, *preferable*, *procurable*, *profitable*, *questionable*, *reasonable*, *remarkable*, *reputable*, *respectable*, *responsible*, *seasonable*, *tolerable*, *valuable*, *vulnerable*.

This form has much expanded in the last two centuries. Many of the adjectives of this type which are most familiar to us do not occur in Shakspeare. He has neither *approachable*, nor *unapproachable*, nor *available*, nor *respectable*. Although he has *accept*, *acceptance*, *accepted*, he has not *acceptable*. Nor has he *accountable*, although he has *account*, *accountant*, and *accounted*. He has *responsive* but not *responsible*. And although he has *value*, *valued*, *valuing*, and *valueless*, yet he has not *valuable*. When we consider the great copiousness of Shakspeare's diction, and his unlimited command of the English of his day, it seems almost equivalent to saying that these terms, so familiar now, had not then been coined. We seem here to have a strong mark of the progress of our language in a point which might easily escape observation.

A remarkable change has passed over the value of this termination in modern times. It was formerly active or neuter in its signification; whereas it now inclines very decidedly to a passive sense. Thus, the old word *colourable* was not employed for that which is capable of being coloured, according to the prevalent modern use of the termination, but for that which seeks to colour the aspect of anything.

*colourable.*

‘The wisard could no longer beare her bord,  
But, bursting forth in laughter, to her sayd:  
“Glaucé, what needes this colourable word  
To cloke the cause that hath it selfe bewrayd?”’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 3. 19.

‘November 3, 1869. Vice-Chancellor Malins had before him to-day the case of *Bradbury v. Beeton*, in which Mr. Jessel, as counsel for Messrs. Bradbury and Evans, the proprietors of *Punch*, had asked for an injunction to restrain the defendant from publishing a penny weekly publication called *Punch and Judy*, on the ground that it was a colourable imitation of *Punch*. The Vice-Chancellor refused the application on the ground that nobody of ordinary intelligence could be misled into confounding *Punch* with *Punch and Judy*.’

A good instance of the same kind is *persuasible*, the alternative rendering of *enticing* in 1 Cor. ii. 4; where, instead of *persuasible*, we should now say *persuasive*; and this Dean Alford has adopted in his Revised Version.

Paley, in his *Evidences*, has used the word *answerable* in an active sense, as conveying the notion of being under obligation to make answer; whereas we now use the negative *unanswerable* in a passive sense, of an argument that cannot be answered. These are Paley’s words:—

‘But to make Christianity answerable, with its life, for the circumstantial truth of each separate passage of the Old Testament, the genuineness of every book, the information, fidelity, and judgment, of every writer in it, is to bring, I will not say great, but unnecessary difficulties into the whole system.’

But perhaps there is no word in which it is more necessary to watch the shades of this transition, than in the word *comfortable*, supposed in our day to convey a peculiarly English idea. That was hardly its idea in the seventeenth century:—

‘Fancy will the better be kept within its due bounds, if we consider the principal use thereof. Sense and imagination is properly to judge what is comfortable or uncomfortable, what is pleasing or displeasing to the outward man, not what is morally or spiritually good or ill; and thus far by the laws of nature and civility we are bound to give fancy contentment both in ourselves and others, as not to speak or do anything uncomely, which may occasion a loathing or distaste in our converse with men; and it is a matter of conscience to make our lives as comfortable as may be. As we are bound to love, so we are bound to use all helps that may make us lovely, and endear us into the good affections of others. As we are bound to give no offence to the conscience of another, so to no power or faculty either of the outward or inward man of another. Some are taken off in their affection by a fancy whereof they can give but little reason; and some are more careless in giving offence in this kind than stands with that Christian circumspection and mutual respect which we owe one to another.’—Richard Sibbes, *Soul's Conflict*, ch. xiii.

Other instances to the same effect are:—

*personable.*

‘A thousand thoughts she fashiond in her mind,  
And in her feigning fancie did pourtray  
Him such as fittest she for love could find,  
Wise, warlike, personable, courteous, and kind.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 4. 5.

*conscionable* = conscientious.

‘Not in a furious zeal for or against trivial circumstances, but in a conscionable practising the substantial parts of religion.’—Isaac Barrow, *The Pleasantness of Religion*.

This word is no longer used, but its negative *unconscionable* is still current. The passive use of our day is such as we see in the following:—

*unsmotherable.*

‘To the unsmotherable delight of all the porters and bystanders.’—*Pickwick Papers*, ch. xxviii.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this formative was sometimes pronounced in English as it still is in French, with the accent on the penultimate. We now say *implacable*, but Spenser sounded it *implacable* :—

'I burne, I burne, I burne, then lowde he sayde,  
O how I burne with implacable fyre!'

*The Faery Queene*, ii. 6. 44.

403. **-ard** is a form of which it is difficult to say whether its habit is more that of a substantive or of an adjective.

*lubbard.*

'Or if the garden with its many cares  
(All well repaid) demand him, he attends  
The welcome call, conscious how much the hand  
Of lubbard Labour needs his watchful eye.'

William Cowper, *The Garden*.

404. In **-al**, French *-al* and *-el*, Latin *-alis*.

Examples :—*accidental, carnal, diurnal, eternal, formal, habitual, influential, inquisitorial, intellectual, intelligential* Milton, *intentional, martial, nuptial, parental, partial, sensual, suicidal*.

*parental.*

'That, under cover of the Phœnician name, we can trace the channels through which the old parental East poured into the fertile soil of the Greek mind the seeds of civilisation.'—William Ewart Gladstone, *Juventus Mundi*, p. 129.

*seasonal.*

'We know with what meaning the lily of the field looked up into his eye; and if the robe of beauty on the earth was to him no dead product of the seasonal machine, but' &c.—James Martineau, *The Three Stages*.

*residual.*

'But the planetary orbits turned out to be not quite circular after all; and grand as was the service Copernicus rendered to science, Kepler and Newton had to come after him. What if the orbit of Darwinism should be a little

too circular? What if species should offer residual phenomena, here and there, not explicable by natural selection?'—T. H. Huxley, *Lay Sermons*.

*natural, developmental.*

'Dr. Carpenter did not agree with him that natural selection was a *vera causa*. The true cause lay in those developmental forms which gave origin to advances of type and varieties of form. Natural selection by producing the survival of the fittest did nothing but limit and direct the operation of this cause.'—*The Guardian*, August 28, 1872.

Many substantives have been produced from this adjectival form. Thus, cardinal bishop has become Cardinal, general captain has become General, cathedral church has become Cathedral, and Confessional is better known as a substantive than as an adjective.

In like manner *capital* is now better known as a substantive. For a capital city we say a Capital; for capital letters we say Capitals; and the chapters in architecture are also called Capitals. So that there is a freshness, as of novelty almost, about the adjectival use:—

'The old traditions which invested parents with the right to govern their children, and made Obedience the capital virtue of childhood, have begun to disappear.'—R. W. Dale, *The Ten Commandments* (1872), p. 7.

**405.** In **-ic**, after the French *-ique*.

Examples:—*angelic, apostolic, aquatic, artistic, bombastic, domestic, fantastic, gigantic, heroic, lethargic, majestic, narcotic, pedantic, rustic, specific, sulphuric, terrific, volcanic*.

These were from the Latin *-icus*, and this, probably, was from the Greek *-ikos*; but in tracing the philology of our own tongue, we are not so much concerned with the remote as with the immediate source. And although the question of French or Latin is at times a little embroiled, there can be no doubt that it was under French auspices and tutorship that we first acquired this formative. This point is set beyond doubt by the fact that we have another French



formative of which this forms the basis. A more dubious point it oftentimes is to decide whether we ought to refer a given adjective to this French class, or to the Greek class in *-ic*, which will be noticed below. Where the stock of the word is un-Greek, we should class it here. But the reverse does not hold. A few purely Greek words belong here rather than below, as *apostolic*. In this case, history tells us that the word is older than the Greek inundation. In other cases, such as *fantastic*, although the word is Greek throughout, yet the spelling with *f* instead of *ph* seems to vindicate it for the French reign.

Here too must be ranged those national and characteristic designations, *Arabic*, *Bardic*, *Gaelic*, *Gallic*, *Gothic*, *Icelandic*, *Ptolemaic*, *Quixotic*, *Runic*, *Sardonic*.

406. In *-ical*, after the French.

This formative is based upon *-ic*. In the two languages, French and English, the cause of this cumulative form was probably the same. The adjectives in French *-ique* and English *-ic* ran with unusual celerity into substantival significations, as *domestique*, domestic; *physique*, physic; *logique*, logic. Hence there was a further demand for an adjectival form which should be unequivocal. This seems to be the account of that strain of adjectives in *-ical*, which is one of the notes of the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and which has been largely discarded in recent times. Matthew Parker dreaded the 'Germanical natures' of those who would fain have Zwinglianised the Church of England<sup>1</sup>.

*domestical*.

'Dogs and such like domestical creatures.'—Richard Sibbes, *Soul's Conflict*, ch. x.

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<sup>1</sup> W. F. Hook, *Archbishops*, New Series, vol. iv. ch. 7.



an excellent specimen of the way in which the resources of language are enriched by mere variation.

408. While we are touching Italian we may notice (parenthetically) an adjectival form which looks Italian, though we probably adopted it at first from the Spaniards. This is the form *-ese*, in certain national designations, as *Bengalese*, *Cingalese*, *Chinese*, *Genoese*, *Maltese*, *Portuguese*, *Tyrolese*. Mr. Carlyle enjoys the singular distinction of having his English style characterised after this adjectival form, and called *Carlylese*.

This orthography is rather Italian than Spanish. An Englishman is in Spanish called *Ingles*, but in Italian *Inglese*. At the time when our maritime expeditions and our politics brought us most into contact with Spaniards, our literary habits were more influenced by the Italian language than by the Spanish: and hence it is quite probable that this form may have been learnt of Spaniards and yet dressed in an Italian orthography.

409. Before we have quite done with our French adjectives, we ought to notice one which has filled a large space in the history of our language. This is the adjective *quaint*. It was already a great word in the transition period; it was an established word of old standing when Chaucer wrote, and it still retains some vitality. A word so often met with in ages so widely distant, and bearing such a variety of signification, merits a paragraph to itself.

There have been at all periods of history certain prominent and favourite words—words of the day. By way of ready illustration, we might mention *fine* and *elegant* as favourite words of last century; and *nice* and *interesting* as words that are repeated with great frequency in our own day. Such a favourite word was *quaint* in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. In the old French it was written *coint*,

*choint*, and Diez (*v. conto*) derives it from the Latin 'cognitus.' Ducange derived it from 'comptus,' neat, trim, orderly, handsome. No doubt the derivation of Diez is the one which rightly accounts for the physical composition of the word, just as *acquaint* is the mediæval Latin 'adcognitare.' But in this latter case there is a correspondence of meaning which we miss in the identification of *quaint* with *cognitus*. It almost seems as if the word had derived its body from the one source and its mind from the other <sup>1</sup>.

At the time of the rise of King's English in the fourteenth century, *quaint* was a great social word describing an indefinite compass of merit and approbation. Whatever things were agreeable, elegant, clever, neat, trim, gracious, pretty, amiable, taking, affable, proper, spruce, handsome, happy, knowing, dodgy, cunning, artful, gentle, prudent, wise, discreet (and all this is but a rough translation of Roquefort's equivalents for *coûte*), were included under this comprehensive word.

In Chaucer, the spear of Achilles, which can both heal and hurt, is called a 'quaint spear':—

'And fell in speech of Telephus the king  
And of Achilles for his queinte spere,  
For he coude with it both hele and dere.'

*Canterbury Tales*, 10553.

Shakspeare has 'quaint Ariel,' *Tempest*, i. 2; and another good instance of this earlier use in *Much Ado about Nothing*, iii. 4. 20: 'But for a fine, quaint, graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.'

By the time we come to Spenser it has acquired a new

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<sup>1</sup> It has been said that no word can have two derivations. But I think there are cases in which a word may be traced up to more sources than one. I commend the subject to the observation of the student. Compare 82, 83, 940.

sense, very naturally evolved from the possession of all the most esteemed social accomplishments; it has come to mean fastidious. Florimell, when she has taken refuge in the hut of the witch, is fain to accept her rude hospitalities:

' And gan recomfort her in her rude wyse,  
 With womanish compassion of her plaint,  
 Wiping the teares from her suffused eyes,  
 And bidding her sit downe, to rest her faint  
 And wearie limbes awhile. She, nothing quaint  
 Nor 'sdeignfull of so homely fashion,  
 Sith brought she was now to so hard constraint,  
 Sat downe upon the dusty ground anon:  
 As glad of that small rest as bird of tempest gon.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 7. 10.

Another stage in our national history, and we come to the period at which the word has stuck fast ever since, and there rooted itself. We may almost say that the word *quaint* now signifies 'after the fashion of the seventeenth century,' or something to that effect. It means something that is pretty after some bygone standard of prettyness; and if we trace back the time we shall find it in the seventeenth century. As the memory of man is in legal doctrine localised to the reign of Richard the Second, as 'Old English' is (or was, before there was an Early English Text Society, and before Mr. Freeman had arisen to assign a new meaning to the word English) particularly identified with the language of the fifteenth century; so quaintness of diction has acquired for itself a permanent place in the literature of the seventeenth.

'In many respects Fuller may be considered the very type and exemplar of that large class of religious writers of the seventeenth century to which we emphatically apply the term "quaint." That word has long ceased to mean what it once meant. By derivation, and by original usage, it first signified "scrupulously elegant, refined, exact, accurate," beyond the reach of common art. In time it came to be applied to whatever was designed to indicate these characteristics—though excogitated with so elaborate a subtlety as to trespass on ease and nature.' In a word, it was applied to what was ingenious

and fantastic, rather than tasteful or beautiful. It is now wholly used in this acceptance; and always implies some violation of the taste, some deviation from what the "natural" requires under the given circumstances. . . . Now the age in which Fuller lived was the golden age of "quaintness" of all kinds—in gardening, in architecture, in costume, in manners, in religion, in literature. As men improved external nature with a perverse expenditure of money and ingenuity—made her yews and cypresses grow into peacocks and statues, tortured and clipped her luxuriance into monotonous uniformity, turned her graceful curves and spirals into straight lines and parallelograms, compelled things incongruous to blend in artificial union, and then measured the merits of the work, not by the absurdity of the design, but by the difficulty of the execution,—so in literature, the curiously and elaborately unnatural was too often the sole object. . . . The constitution of Fuller's mind had such an affinity with the peculiarities of the day, that what was "quaint" in others seems to have been his natural element—the sort of attire in which his active and eccentric genius loved to clothe itself.—*Edinburgh Review*, January 1842: Thomas Fuller.

410. Here we may bring our French list to an end, but not without the observation, which has been already made above under the substantive, that the line of division between our French and Latin groups is much blurred. The general case is this: We took the form itself from the French; but the great bulk of the words that now constitute the group, have been derived to us from the Latin. But it should be added that many words seem now most easily to be traceable to the Latin, which we originally borrowed from the French. For in the great latinising tyranny, many words were purged from the tinge of their French original, and reclaimed to a Latin standard. The *delitable* of Chaucer and Piers Plowman had become *delectable* 'lofig before John Bunyan wrote of the Delectable Mountains.

When the learned of the nation were steeped in Latin, vast quantities of French words in our language had a new surface of Latin put upon them. And the Latin invasion did not stop here; some old Saxon forms were modified in a Latin sense.

411. The form in *-eous*, *-ous*, with which our Latin list begins, is one that seems to thread together the Saxon

-*wis*, and the French -*ois* or -*eux*, and the Latin -*ius* or -*osus*; in one continuity of development. We can hardly disconnect the modern *righteous* from the Saxon *rihtwis*, any more than we can *courteous* from French *cortois*, or *gracious* from *gracieux*, which is the spelling of the word in English of the year 1402, as may be seen above, 71.

Examples:—*boisterous, covetous, dexterous, disastrous, erroneous, glorious, gracious, jealous, luxurious, meritorious, multitudinous* Shakspeare, *necessitous, noxious, obstreperous, outrageous, pious, poisonous, riotous, serious, specious, timorous, zealous.*

*joyous, courteous, gracious, spacious.*

‘Long were it to describe the goodly frame,  
And stately port of Castle Joyeous,  
(For so that Castle hight by commun name)  
Where they were entertaýnd with courteous  
And comely glee of many gracious  
Faire Ladies, and of many a gentle knight,  
Who, through a Chamber long and spacious,  
Eftsoones them brought unto their Ladies sight,  
That of them cleeped was the Lady of Delight.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. I. 31.

*stercoraceous.*

‘The stable yields a stercoraceous heap.’

William Cowper, *The Garden*.

*obstreperous.*

‘Nor is it a mean praise of rural life  
And solitude, that they do favour most  
Most frequently call forth, and best sustain,  
These pure sensations; that can penetrate  
The obstreperous city; on the barren seas  
Are not unfelt.’ William Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Bk. IV.

*melodious, spacious.*

‘Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath  
Preluded those melodious bursts, that fill  
The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
With sounds that echo still.’

Alfred Tennyson, *Dream of Fair Women*.

*luxurious.*

'A free nation ought not to provoke war; but it ought not to be too luxurious and ease-loving to fight, if the occasion should arise.'—Llewellyn Davies, *The Gospel and Modern Life*, p. 45.

*erroneous.*

'Mr. — said the right hon. gentleman who had just sat down had made statements which, from his experience, he would show to be entirely false.

'The SPEAKER—The hon. member means to say erroneous. (A laugh.)

'Mr. — begged to apologise for using a word which was not Parliamentary. He had been but a short time in the House, and was therefore not well versed in Parliamentary terms (a laugh), but if there was any Parliamentary term stronger than the word "erroneous," he would beg leave to use it with reference to some of the statements of the right hon. gentleman.'—House of Commons, June 17, 1870.

*Bumptious* was a slang adjective which appeared between 1830 and 1840 at Oxford and Cambridge. It is now sometimes seen in literature:

'“Look at that comical sparrow,” she said. “Look how he cocks his head first on one side and then on the other. Does he want us to see him? Is he bumptious, or what?”’—George Macdonald, *The Seaboard Parish*, ch. xi.

412. -ose. The next place seems due to another form of the Latin termination -osus. It is as markedly modern as the previous one is distinguished for its old standing in the language. It has an Italian tinge.

Examples:—*bellicose*, *globose* Milton, *glorioso*, *grandiose*, *operose*, *otiose*, *varicose*.

*otiose.*

'We lay out of the case such stories of supernatural events as require on the part of the hearer nothing more than an otiose assent; stories upon which nothing depends, in which no interest is involved, nothing is to be done or changed in consequence of believing them.'—Paley's *Evidences*.

*operose.*

'I heard Dr. Chalmers preach. It was a splendid discourse against the Judaical observance of the Sabbath, which he termed "an expedient for



pacifying the jealousies of a God of vengeance,"—reprobating the operose drudgery of such Sabbaths. Many years afterwards, I mentioned this to Irving, who was then the colleague of Chalmers: and he told me that the Deacons waited on the Doctor to remonstrate with him on the occasion of this sermon.—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1821.

### 413. In -ive, Latin -ivus.

Examples:—*active, aggregative, appreciative, associative, authoritative, comparative, conclusive, creative, distinctive, elective, exclusive, forgetive, Shakspeare, 2 Henry IV, iv. 3; imaginative, inventive, legislative, passive, pensive, positive, reflective, reparative, repulsive, responsive, relentive, sensitive, speculative, suggestive, superlative.*

#### *crescive.*

'Grew like the Summer Grasse, fastest by Night,  
Vnseene yet cressiue in his facultie.'

Shakspeare, *Henry V*, i. 2.

#### *responsive.*

'The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung.'

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*.

#### *speculative.*

'High on her speculative tower  
Stood Science waiting for the hour.'

William Wordsworth, *The Eclipse of the Sun*, 1820.

#### *aggregative, associative, creative, motive.*

'Fancy is aggregative and associative—Imagination is creative, motive.'—John Brown, M.D., *Horæ Subsecivæ*.

#### *conclusive.*

'The admissions of an advocate are the most conclusive evidence.'—Bishop of St. Davids (Dr. Thirlwall), *Cbargo*, 1863.

#### *reparative.*

'The art of nursing, as now practised, seems to be expressly constituted to unmake what God had made disease to be, viz. a reparative process.'—Florence Nightingale, *Notes on Nursing*.

*distinctive.*

'There was something so very distinctive in him, traits and tones to make an impression to be remembered all one's life.'—John Keble, *Memoir*, p. 452.

This form has been fruitful in substantives, as *detective*, *executive*, *motive*, *palliative*, *representative*.

'Horne Tooke having obtained a seat in the House of Commons as representative of the famous borough of Old Sarum.'—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1801.

414. In *-ine*, Latin *-inus*, *-ineus*.

Examples :—*canine*, *divine*, *feminine*, *internecine*, *marine*, *masculine*, *sanguine*.

Our pronunciation of *marine* is decidedly French, and thus we are again reminded that our Latin list is not purely and exclusively of direct Latin derivat, but only prevalently so.

This form has produced some gentile adjectives; as, *Florentine*, *Latin*, *Philistine*.

415. In *-ary*, Latin *-arius*.

Examples :—*contemporary*, *missionary*, *secondary*, *sanitary*, *stationary*, *tertiary*, *visionary*.

*petitionary.*

'Ros. Nay, I pre' thee now, with most petitionary vehemence, tell me who it is.'—*As You Like It*, iii. 2.

'Claspt hands and that petitionary grace  
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke.'

Alfred Tennyson, *The Brook*.

This form occurs frequently in its substantival aspect :

*signatory.*

'All the Powers, signatories of the Treaty of 1856.'—*Queen's Speech*, 1867.

*contemporary.*

'Seneca was strictly a contemporary of St. Paul.'—Professor Lightfoot, *St. Paul and Seneca*.

416. In *-atory*, Latin *-atorius*.

Examples:—*commendatory*, *criminatory*, *derogatory*, *exculpatory*, *expiatory*, *migratory*, *nugatory*, *obligatory*, *preparatory*, *propitiatory*, *respiratory*, *supplicatory*.

*criminatory*.

‘And was taken with strongly criminatory papers in his possession.’

417. In *-ant* and *-ent*, from the Latin participial terminations *-ans*, *-antis*; *-ens*, *-entis*.

Examples:—*blatant*, *constant*, *elegant*, *expedient*, *insolent*, *insolvent*, *jubilant*, *petulant*, *solvent*.

Many of these forms are used substantively, as *expedient*, *insolvent*; and, in one of its senses,

*solvent*.

‘And I say that the Resurrection is a fact; attested by various and converging evidence; defying the action of the critical solvents which unbelief applies to it; and, let me add, reigning in the thought of every thinking Christian, as a vast evidential power.’—H. P. Liddon, at St. Paul’s, Easter Day, 1869.

Several of these are rather French than Latin, as the heraldic *rampant*.

*petulant*.

‘The boys, when the periodical vacation drew near, growing petulant at the approach of liberty.’—Samuel Johnson, *Life of Addison*.

The word *elegant* merits a special notice. It is now little used: almost the only new combination it has entered into in our day is in the dialect of the apothecary, who speaks of an ‘elegant preparation.’

In the last century, and in the early part of this century, we had *Elegant Extracts*, and besides these, we had *elegant* in a variety of honoured positions. Scott spoke of Goethe as ‘the elegant author of *The Sorrows of Werther*.’ In the first sentence of Bishop Lowth’s address *To the*

*King*, which is prefixed to his *Isaiah*, this word comes in, thus:—

‘SIRE,

AN attempt to set in a just light the writings of the most sublime and elegant of the Prophets of the Old Testament,’ &c.

George Horne (afterwards Bishop of Norwich), towards the close of last century published some sermons, and half apologising in his Preface said:—

‘This form of publication is generally supposed less advantageous at present than any other. But it may be questioned whether the supposition does justice to the age, when we consider only the respect which has so recently been paid to the sermons of the learned and elegant Dr. Blair.’

418. The form *-lent*, from the Latin *-lentus*, must be distinguished from the foregoing.

Examples:—*corpulent, esculent, feculent, flatulent, fraudulent, opulent, somnolent, succulent, truculent, violent, virulent*.

Some adjectives in *-ent*, with an *L* of the root, have a false semblance of belonging here, as *benevolent, equivalent, indolent, insolent, prevalent, malevolent*. Here we seem almost over the border of English philology, but in dealing with such a borrowing language as ours, it is not always easy to draw the boundary line.

*esculent.*

‘The Chinese present a striking contrast with ourselves in the care which they bestow on their esculent vegetation. . . . A more general knowledge of the properties and capabilities of esculent plants would be an important branch of popular education.’—C. D. Badham, *The Esculent Funguses of England*, ed. F. Currey, p. xvi.

419. *-an, -ian*, Latin *-anus, -ianus*; as *African, American, diocesan, Hibernian, Indian, Persian, Polynesian, Puritan, Roman, Russian*.

This form acquired its importance in the first century of the Roman Empire. The soldiers who attached themselves to Julius Cæsar in the civil wars were called *Juliani*, and

this grew to be the established formula for the expression of a body of supporters or followers. The friends of Otho were called *Othoniani*, those of Vitellius were *Vitelliani*; and in the same general period it was that 'the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.'

*Robinsonian.*

‘WILLIAM WORDSWORTH TO H. C. ROBINSON.

12th March, 1821.

My dear Friend,—You were very good in writing to me so long a letter, and kind in your own Robinsonian way.’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*.

420. We will now proceed to the Greek forms.

In *-ic*, from the Greek *-ikos*.

Examples:—*academic, acoustic, æsthetic, analytic, arctic, antarctic, apathetic, apologetic, archaic, aromatic, athletic, atomic, authentic, barbaric* Milton, *cathartic, despotic, diatonic, ethic, gastric, graphic, telegraphic, theoretic*.

These are roughly distinguishable from those in *-ic* after the French *-ique*, by being entirely of Greek material. That class is more mixed. There is perhaps no form that more distinctly represents the influx of Greek, and its general adoption into scientific terminology. A large part of these adjectives are shared by us with all the great languages of western Europe.

*authentic.*

‘Methinks I see him—how his eye-balls rolled,  
Beneath his ample brow, in darkness paired,—  
But each instinct with spirit; and the frame  
Of the whole countenance alive with thought,  
Fancy, and understanding; while the voice  
Discoursed of natural or moral truth  
With eloquence, and such authentic power,  
That, in his presence, humbler knowledge stood  
Abashed, and tender pity overawed.’

William Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Bk. VII.

and *-astic, -istic, -ustic*, from the Greek *-στικῆ*.

Examples :—*antagonistic, caustic, characteristic, drastic, enthusiastic, patristic, pleonastic.*

*Comparison of Adjectives.*

421. Some slight traces remain of that ancient Indo-European -MA superlative, which we see in Greek and Latin, as *altissimus*, ἄβδομος, *infimus, primus, optimus, ultimus.*

It is a remarkable point of agreement between Mæso-Gothic and Anglo-Saxon, that these two, almost to the exclusion of the other dialects, have preserved this ancient form. Some specimens of it linger on in English, partially masked under a modern guise, as if it had something to do with *more* and *most*.

| MÆSO-GOTHIC. | ANGLO-SAXON. | ENGLISH.    |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| fruma        | forma        | foremost.   |
| hinduma      | hindema      | hindermost  |
| innuma       | inquema      | innermost   |
|              | utema        | uttermost   |
|              | medema       | midmost     |
|              | niðema       | nethermost. |

This eldest fashion of comparison carries a certain impressiveness with it; as when Mr. Mill says,

‘... that on the inmost nature of the thinking principle, as well as on the inmost nature of matter, we are, and with our present faculties must always remain, entirely in the dark.’

422. The system of comparison which is common to the whole Gothic family is that in *-er* and *-est*.

We English have moved on to a third method, namely by prefixing the adverbs *more* and *most*: a method which is also used in Swedish and Danish.

This has gained immensely in modern times upon the elder forms, insomuch that the comparison by *-er* and *-est* is rarely used now for words of more than two syllables,

and not always for these. In early writers we meet with such long forms as *ancienter*, *eloquenter*, *honourablest*, but in our day such forms are used only for a certain rhetorical effect that they carry with them, or for a sort of humour which they seem to convey.

*cunningest.*

‘Does human nature possess any free, volitional, or truly anthropomorphic element, or is it only the cunningest of all Nature’s clocks?’—Professor Huxley, *Lay Sermons*, viii.

In an anonymous story-book which purports to represent life in East London, the flectional comparison of long words is a stock feature of the characterisation. A churlish dealer in waste paper, who is something of a reader, talks as follows:—

*wonderfullest.*

‘I like travels, too, a bit, and now and then I get hold of an interesting Life, but mostly they’re about people that nobody ever knew anything about till they were dead, and then somebody makes ’em out to be the wonderfullest people that ever lived.’—*Episodes in an Obscure Life*, vol. ii. ch. viii.

The effect is still more peculiar when a participle is so treated:

*startled.*

‘And yet, if you’ll believe me, I once found a fairy story in a blue-book. If I’d found a fairy in it I couldn’t have been startled.’—*Id. ibid.*

*Logical function of the Adjective; with a remarkable consequence.*

**423.** Having said so much on adjectival forms, let us now consider the logical quality of the adjective, and the practical effect of that logical quality upon our habitual conversation.

An adjective is plainly of the nature of a predicate, as plainly as a substantive is of the nature of a subject. Now, to select a predicate for a subject is an act of judgment. It is manifest that judgment is more exercised in the utterance of adjectives than in that of substantives. I say *horse* from mere memory of my mother-tongue, and we hardly dignify it as an act of judgment if a man uses that word in the right place, and shews that he knows a horse when he sees it. But to say *good horse*, *bad horse*, *sound horse*, *young horse*, is an affair of judgment. A child knows when he sees a garden, and we do not call it an act of judgment (except in technical logic) to exclaim *There's a garden*. But to use *garden* adjectively, as when a person comes across a flower, and says it is a *garden flower*, this is an act of judgment which it takes a botanist to exercise safely. This being so, a speaker runs a greater chance of making a mistake, or of coming into collision with the judgments of others, in the use of adjectives. Partly from the rarity of good and confident judgment, and partly it may also be from the modesty which social intercourse requires, we perceive this effect, that there is a shyness about the utterance of adjectives. Of original adjectives, I mean such as can at all carry the air of being the speaker's own. And hence it has come about, that there is in each period or generation, one or more chartered social adjectives which may be used freely and safely. Such adjectives enjoy a sort of empire for the time in which they are current. Their meaning is more or less vague, and it is this quality that suits them for their office. But while it would be hard to define what such an adjective meant, it is nevertheless perfectly well understood. Obvious examples of this sort of privileged adjective are the *merry* of the ballads, and the *fair* and *pretty* of the Elizabethan period. In Mrs. Cowden Clarke's *Concordance to Shakspeare*, there are about



seven hundred examples of *fair*, without counting its derivatives and compounds. Perhaps this perpetual recurrence of the word made a butt at it all the more amusing:—

'*King*. All haile sweet Madame, and faire time of day.

*Qu*. Faire in all Haile is fowle, as I conceiue.

*King*. Construe my speeches better, if you may.'

*Loues Labour's lost*, v. 2. 340.

'*Pan*. Faire be to you my Lord, and to all this faire company; faire desires in all faire measure fairely guide them, especially to you faire Queene, faire thoughts be your faire pillow.

*Helen*. Deere Lord, you are full of faire words.

*Pan*. You speake your faire pleasure sweete Queene: faire Prince, here is good broken Musicke.'—*Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 1. 46.

This word had something of this character from a very early date; it flourished both as adjective *fæger* and adverb *fægere* in Saxon literature; it gained a new activity in the twelfth century, and it occurs in the last line of the latest Saxon Chronicle (1154) in the form of the present day: and under the forms *uair*, *vair*, and adverb *vaire*, is the most prevalent of qualifying words in Robert of Gloucester.

Another such was in the last century the adjective *fine*, and in a minor degree the adjective *elegant*. Of the latter we have had some illustrations above. Its companion is worthy of the like honour:—

### *fine*.

'The truly philosophical language of my worthy and learned friend Mr. Harris, the author of *Hermes*, a work that will be read and admired as long as there is any taste for philosophy and fine writing in Britain.'—Lord Monboddo, *Origin and Progress of Language*, init.

424. But none of these ever reached a greater, if so great, a vogue as the chartered adjective of our own and our fathers' generation, namely, the adjective *nice*.

Should an essayist endeavour by description to convey the

signification of this word in those peculiar social uses so familiar to all, he would find that he had undertaken a difficult task. It implies more or less the possession of those qualities which enjoy the approbation of society under its present code.

The word dates from the great French period, and at first meant 'foolish, absurd, ridiculous'; then in course of time it came to signify 'whimsical, fantastic, wanton, adroit'; and thence it slid into the meaning of 'subtle, delicate, sensitive,' which landed it on the threshold of its modern social application. Of this we have already a foretaste in Milton:—

'A nice and subtle happiness I see  
Thou to thyself proposest in the choice  
Of thy associates.' *Paradise Lost*, viii. 399.

A more special use is the following, and not the vague social use, yet bordering closely upon it. This sense, in which it is nearly equivalent to 'fastidious,' has now but little currency, being crowded out by the social use.

'But never was a Fight manag'd so hardily, and in such a surprizing Manner, as that which follow'd between Friday and the Bear, which gave us all (though at first we were surpriz'd and afraid for him) the greatest Diversion imaginable: As the Bear is a heavy, clumsy Creature, and does not gallop as the Wolf does, who is swift, and light; so he has two particular Qualities, which generally are the Rule of his Actions; First, as to Men, who are not his proper Prey; I say, not his proper Prey; because tho' I cannot say what excessive Hunger might do, which was now their Case, the Ground being all cover'd with Snow; but as to Men he does not usually attempt them, unless they first attack him; On the contrary, if you meet him in the Woods, if you don't meddle with him, he won't meddle with you; but then you must take Care to be very civil to him, and give him the Road: for he is a very nice Gentleman, he won't go a Step out of his Way for a Prince,' &c.—*Robinson Crusoe*. Edited after the Original Editions by J. W. Clark, p. 298.

As far back as 1823, a young lady objected to Sydney Smith: 'Oh, don't call me *nice*, Mr. Sydney; people only say that when they can say nothing else.' This expostula-

tion drew forth his Definition of a Nice Person, which may be seen in the Memoir of his Life, and which will serve to complete the case of this important little office-bearing adjective.

*Morphology of the Adjective.*

425. Let us close this section with some observations on the morphology of the adjective, or in other words, on the divers ways it has of dressing itself up to act its part on the stage of language.\* By 'adjective' here is meant the pure mental conception, as opposed to the form. There are three ways in which the adjectival idea clothes itself and finds expression, which it may be convenient to call the three adjections.

1. The first, which may be called the Flat<sup>1</sup>, is by collocation. Thus, *brick* and *stone* are substantives; but mere position before another substantive turns them into adjectives, as, *brick house*, *stone wall*; and the latter, when condensed into a compound substantive, *stone-wall*, may again by collocation make a new adjective, as 'Stone-wall Jackson.'

Thus we speak of *garden flowers* and *hedge flowers* :—

'Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,  
And still where many a garden flower grows wild.'

Oliver Goldsmith, *Deserted Village*.

In some instances we see that a substantive, through long standing in such a position, has acquired the adjectival habit exclusively. Thus *milch*, in the expressions 'milch cow,'

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<sup>1</sup> I have been asked, Why 'Flat'? To this I can only answer by another question :—Why do you say 'a flat refusal'? or, 'a flat contradiction'? or, 'No, I won't, that's flat'? What does the word mean in the following quotation?—'He turned neither better nor worse than flat Atheist,' Thomas Fuller, *Life and Death of Franciscus Junius* in 'Abel Redivivus,' 1651.

'milch goat,' though now an adjective, yet is nothing but a phonetic variety of the substantive *milk*, just as *church* and *kirk* are varieties of the same word. In the German language the current substantive for *milk* has the form of our present adjective, viz. *Milch*. Let our particular example of this adjection be *elm tree*.

2. The second, which may be called the Flexional, is by modification of form, either (a) in the way of flexion, as *heaven's gate*, or (b) through an adjectival formative, as *elmen tree*. The latter, being the most prevalent of all modes of adjection, has occupied to itself the whole name of Adjective.

3. The third way, which may be called the Phrasal, is by means of a symbol-word, and most prominently by the preposition *of*, as *gate of heaven*.

In the compound *knighthood* the word *knight* affords an instance of the adjective by collocation. We may express the same idea in this form, *knight's rank*, or thus, *knightly rank*, and this is the second adjection.

The third adjection is when we say *rank* or *quality of knight*. This form of adjective we have learnt from the French; and although we use it less than our neighbours, yet we are well acquainted with such expressions as *men of property*, *men of learning*, *persons of strong opinions*, *the girl of the period*, *the men of this generation*, *arms of precision*, *days of yore*.

**426.** This triple adjection pervades the language, and is an element of its flexibility. Thus we may tabulate to almost any extent:

| 1.     | 2.            | 3.        |
|--------|---------------|-----------|
| gold   | golden        | of gold   |
| silver | silvern       | of silver |
| steel  | steelly (399) | of steel  |
| timber | timbern       | of timber |
| velvet | velvety       | of velvet |
| wood   | wooden        | of wood   |

The following line displays the first and third :—

‘The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel.’

H. W. Longfellow, *King Robert of Sicily*.

427. This analysis would not be quite idle if it were only for an observation which it enables us to make on the relative adjectival habits of the three languages.

1. The flat adjection is peculiarly English. There is indeed a rare and fitful use of it in French, but in German it is quite gone, having passed into the sphere of the compounds.

2. The adjection 2 (*a*), unknown in French, is common to English and German. The 2 (*b*) is the technical adjective, and all this section has been occupied with it, and it is common to the three as to all mature languages. But the German, being destitute of the First Adjection, and little disposed to avail itself of the Third, uses this Flexional one to an extent which sometimes creates surprise. Thus Jacob Grimm’s Grammar is with perfect propriety called ‘die Grimmsche grammatik,’ and his works are spoken of as ‘die Grimmschen werke.’

3. The Third Adjection is imitated a little in German and a good deal in English, but in neither to such a degree as to obscure the fact that it was French by origin, or to interfere with its national character as a prominent distinction of the French in common with the Romanesque languages.

Such are the three ways in which we manage the expression of the adjectival idea, or, as we may conveniently style it, the three methods of adjection.

This threefold variety of adjectival expression has a philological importance which will more clearly be seen in the next section, where it will be made the basis of the arrangement.

## III. OF THE ADVERB.

**428.** In Adverbs our attention shall be given to one leading character. It is that which has been already traced in the adjectives at the end of the last section. The adverbs rise stage above stage in a threefold gradation. They are either Flat, Flexional, or Phrasal; and this division gives the plan of the present section.

If a substantive becomes an adverb by position we call it a Flat Adverb, as *forest wild* in 219. Or if an adjective is so transformed, as

*extreme.*

\* All the former Editions being *extream Faulty*.—Preface to *Telemachus*; translated by Littlebury and Boyer, 11th ed.; 1721.

these are flat adverbs. If we say *extremely faulty* we use a flexional adverb: and the same thing may be expressed by a phrasal adverb, thus, *faulty in the extreme*.

But before proceeding to catalogue, it will be desirable to apprehend clearly what an adverb is, in the most pure and simple acceptation of the term. The adverb is the tertiary or third presentive word. It has been shewn above that the substantive is the primary, that the adjective and verb are co-ordinated as the secondary, and we now complete this trilogy of presentives by the addition of the adverb, which is the third and last of presentive words. Whatever material idea is imported into any sentence must be conveyed through one of these three orders of words. All the rest is mechanism.

We assign to the adverb the third place, although we know that it does not stand in that order in every sentence. We do so because this is its true and natural order; for it is

in this order alone that the mind can make use of it as an adverb. Whether the adverb stand first, as in *very fine child*, or in the third place as in *John rides well*, either way it is equally third in mental order. As *fine* is dependent on *child* for its adjectival character, so *very* is dependent on the two for its adverbial character. There is a good meaning in *very* if I say 'a very child,' but it is no longer an adverbial meaning.

429. As a further illustration of the tertiary character of the adverb, it may be noticed that it attaches only to adjectives and verbs, that is to the two secondary words. The adverb is further removed from the base of language, it is higher above the foundation by which language is based in physical nature; in other words, mind is more deeply engaged in its production than it is either in the case of the substantive or of the adjective. Accordingly the adverbs cannot be disposed of in a catalogue such as we have made of substantives and adjectives. The power of making adverbs is too unlimited for us to catalogue them as things moulded and made. The adverb is to be looked at rather as a faculty than as a product, as a potential rather than as a material thing.

Of all presentive words, the adverb has most sympathy with the verb. Indeed, this quality is already intimated in the Latin name of Adverb. It is the peculiar companion of the verb, as the adjective is of the substantive. It continues or intensifies the mental action raised by the verb, or couched in the adjective. And here having reached as it were the third and topmost storey of our edifice, we leave behind us the care for raw material, and think more and more of the arts and graces of architectural composition. We have done with the forest and the quarry, and we are absorbed in the contemplation of the effect. We may yet incidentally notice

that an adverbial form has come from Saxon or other national source; but our main attention will be required by a division as truly inward to the adverbs themselves, as that which formed the plan of the chapter on verbs. And this internal division is the more worthy of consideration, as it is not limited to the adverbs alone, but is correlated to the general economy and progress of language.

### 1. *Of the Flat Adverb.*

430. The Flat Adverb is simply a substantive or an adjective placed in an adverbial position. The same word which, if it qualified a noun, would be called an adjective, being set to qualify an adjective or a verb is called an adverb. The use of the unaltered adjective as an adverb has a peculiar effect, which I know not how to describe better than by the epithet *Flat*. This effect is not equally appreciable in all instances of the thing; but it may perhaps be recognised in such an expression as *wonder great*, which was common in the fourteenth century, or in the following:

*villainous.*

‘With foreheads villainous low.’

W. Shakspeare, *Tempest*, iv. I. 247.

The uneasy young traveller in an American car, who (as Mr. Zincke relates) exclaimed ‘Mother, fix me good,’ gave us there an excellent example of this original adverb of nature.

Although this adverbial use of *good* is not admitted in literary English, the analogous use of *gut* is polite German. Indeed, the flat adverb is much more extensively used in German than in English, as *schreiben Sie langsam*, write



slowly. We do also hear in English *write slow*, but it is rather rustic. In Jeremiah xlix. 8 there is a striking example: 'Flee ye, turne backe, dwell deepe, O inhabitants of Dedan,' where the flat adverb *deep* is an imitation from Luther: *Fliehet, wendet euch und verfriedet euch tief, ihr Bürger zu Dedan.*

• 431. Our English examples of this most primitive form of adverb will mostly be found in the colloquial and familiar specimens of language. In such homely phraseology as *walk fast, walk slow; speak loud, speak low; tell me true*; or again in this, *yes, sure*—we have examples of the flat adverb. They are frequent in our early classics, but the modern grammar-book does not allow them. Instead of *just* and *right*, as in the following passage from Shakspeare, we should now be directed to say 'exactly' or 'precisely':

• 'At this fusty stuffe  
The large *Achilles* (on his prest-bed lolling)  
From his deepe Chest, laughes out a lowd applause,  
Cries excellent, 'tis *Agamemnon* iust.  
Now play me *Nestor*; hum, and stroke thy Beard  
As he, being drest to some Oration:  
That's done, as neere as the extreamest ends  
Of paralels; as like, as *Vulcan* and his wife,  
Yet god *Achilles* still cries excellent,  
'Tis *Nestor* right.' *Troilus and Cressida*, i. 3. 161.

*sure.*

• 'And the work sure was very grateful to all men of devotion.'—Clarendon, *History*, i. § 198.

• *clean.*

• 'Suffre yet a litle whyle, & y<sup>e</sup> vngodly shal be clene gone: thou shalt loke after his place, & he shal be awaye.'—*Psalm* xxxvii. 10. Miles Coverdale, 1535.

In the following, *brisk* is a flat adverb:—

• 'He cherups brisk his ear-erecting steed.'  
William Cowper, *The Task*, Book III.  
D d

*strong.*

'Yet these each other's power so strong contest,  
That either seems destructive of the rest.'

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Traveller*.

In the following, *warm* is a flat adverb :—

'Or when the deep green-mantl'd earth  
Warm cherish'd ev'ry flow'ret's birth,  
And joy 'and music pouring forth  
In ev'ry grove,  
I saw thee eye the gen'ral mirth  
With boundless love.'

Robert Burns, *The Vision*.

*extraordinary.*

'We had an extraordinary good run with the Tiverton hounds yesterday.'  
—*Land and Water*, January 15, 1870.

*pretty.*

'I don't mean to hurt you, you poor little thing,  
And pussy-cat is not behind me;  
So hop about pretty, and put down your wing,  
And pick up the crumbs, and don't mind me.'

*Nursery Rhyme.*

*quick.*

'With eager spring the troutlets rise  
To seize the fair delusive prize;  
And quick the little victims pay  
The penalty of being gay.'

E. W. L. Davies, *Dartmoor Days*, p. 81.

*slow, best.*

'While the bell is cooling slow  
May the workman rest:  
Each, as birds through bushes go,  
Do what likes him best.'

H. D. Skrine, *Schiller's Song of the Bell*.

Of our short and homely adverbs there are some few which did not always belong to this group, but have lapsed

into it from the flexional group. Such are *ill*, *still*, which in Saxon are oblique cases, *ille*, *stille* (disyllabic).

To this group belongs a word, provincial indeed, but prevailing through the eastern half of the island from Norfolk to Northumberland, namely the adverb *geyn*, German *gegen*, meaning 'near, handy, convenient.' Its use appears in the following dialogue taken from life:—

- "Where's the baby's bib, Lavina?"  
 "On the chair, m'm."  
 "I don't see it anywhere here."  
 "Well'm; I'm sure I laid it *geyn*!"

**432.** As a general remark on this section we would say that perhaps there is no part of the language that more plainly forces on us the need of looking beyond the pale of literature and precise grammar, if we are to comprehend the Philology of the English Tongue. Within grammatical liberty we could muster but a very poor account of the flat adverb, and so the whole German adverb would seem to be without a parallel in English.

The flat adverb is in fact rustic and poetic, and both for the same reason, namely, because it is archaic. Out of poetry it is for the most part an archaism, but it must not therefore be set down as a rare, or exceptional, or capricious mode of expression. If judgment went by numbers, this would in fact be entitled to the name of *the English Adverb*. To the bulk of the community the adverb in *-ly* is bookish, and is almost as unused as if it were French. The flat adverb is all but universal with the illiterate. But among literary persons it is hardly used (a few phrases excepted), unless with a humorous intention. This will be made plain by an instance of the use of the flat adverb in correspondence. Charles Lamb, writing to H. C. Robinson, says:—

‘Farewell! till we can all meet comfortable.’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1827.

**433.** This flat and simple adverb suffices for primitive needs, but it soon fails to satisfy the demands of a progressive civilisation. For an example of the kind of need that would arise for something more highly organised, we may resort to that frequent unriddler of philological problems, the Hebrew language. In Exodus xvi. 5 we read, ‘It shall be twice as much as they gather daily.’ Instead of *daily* the Hebrew has *day day*, that is, a flat adverb *day* repeated in order to produce the effect of our *daily* or *day by day*. This affords us a glimpse of the sort of ancient contrivance which was the substitute of flexion before flexion existed, and out of which flexion took its rise.

But for a purely English bridge to the next division we may produce one of the frequent instances in which a flat adverb is coupled with a flexional one, and of which it so happens that the example at this moment before us is Mr. Froude’s assertion that Queen Mary’s letters ‘were examined *long and minutely* by each and every of the lords who were present.’ (Vol. ix. p. 347.) The following line wins some of its effect from this adverbial variation:—

‘Who sings so loudly and who sings so long.’

Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, Bk. III.

## 2. Of the Flexional Adverb.

**434.** When the flexional system of language had become established, and the nouns were declined Nominative, Genitive, Dative, Ablative—a new and effectual way of applying a noun adverbially was by adding it to the sentence in its genitive or ablative or instrumental case. This was the general way of making adverbs in Greek and Latin, and also in Saxon. Of these we have little left to show.

Genitival adverbs are now antiquated, and a certain obscurity rests even on those which remain in use. We will begin with one that savours strongly of antiquity, and which will hardly be found after Chaucer, viz. *his thonkes*, in the sense of willingly, or with his consent :

‘Ful sothis seyde, that love ne lordschipe  
Wol not his thonkes, have no felaschipe.’

*The Knightes Tale*, 768.

We have in familiar and homely use the genitives *mornings* and *evenings*, but we have nothing to match the German *mittag*8.

435. Other instances of the genitival formation are *eastwards*, *eftsoones* Spenser, *Faery Queene*, iii. 11. 38, *eggelinges* = edgewise, *Chevelere Assigne*, 305, *homewards*, *needs*, *northwards*, *southwards*, *upwards*, *westwards*.

*needs*.

‘Sen þou hast lerned by þe sentence of plato þat nedes the wordes moten ben conceyued to þo þinges of whiche þei speken.’—*Boethius* (Early English Text Society), p. 106.

TRANSLATION.—*Since thou hast learned by the sentence of Plato that the words must needs be conceived (fittingly) to the things of which they speak.*

*upwards*.

One's general impression of a mountain is that it should have something of a pyramidal form. The *differentia* of a mountain is, I suppose, that the curves of its outline should be concave upwards, whereas those of a hill are convex.

Of the flexional adverbs formed from case-endings, this is the one which retains most vitality, but it is little more than semi-animate. What vitality it has, tends not towards assimilation of fresh material, but towards symbolism. Many presentive instances have died out. There was an old genitival adverb *days*, for which we must now say ‘by day’ or ‘in

the day time.' In Gothic, *yesterday* is such an adverb, *gistradagis*, Matthew vi. 30. In Shakspeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 12, 'tis but early dayes,' the old genitive appears with something of the effect of the present purpose.

436. Here I would range the adverbs in *-ing* or *-ling*, as

*groveling* = χαμᾶζε.

'Like as the sacred Oxe that carelesse stands,  
With gilden hornes and flowry girlonds crownd,  
Proud of his dying honor and deare bandes,  
Whiles th' altars fume with frankincense arownd,  
All suddainly, with mortall stroke astownd,  
Doth groveling fall, and with his streaming gore  
Distaines the pillours and the holy grownd,  
And the faire flowres that decked him afore:  
So fell proud Marinall upon the pretious shore.'

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 4. 17.

*flatling*.

'But it is worthy of memory, to see how the women of that Towne did ply themselves with their weapons, making a great Massacre upon our men, and murdered 500 of them in such spéddie and furious sort as is wonderfull: wee néeded not to haue feared their men at all, had not the women bin our greatest ouerthrow, at which time I my self was maister Gunner of the Admirals Gally, yet chained gréeuously, and beaten naked with a Turkish sword flatling, for not shooting where they would haue me, and where I could not shoote.'—*Webbe bis trauailes*, 1590 (Arber's Facsimile Reprint).

*darkling*.

'Then feed on Thoughts, that voluntary move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful Bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid  
Tunes her Nocturnal note.'

JOHN MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, iii. 39.

437. The Dative formation is well preserved in the old-fashioned adverb *whilom* or *whilome*:—

'It fortun'd, (as fayre it then befell)  
Behynd his backe, unweeting where he stood,  
Of auncient time there was a springing Well,  
From which fast trickled forth a silver flood,  
Full of great vertues, and for med'cine good:

Whylome, before that cursed Dragon got  
 That happy land, and all with innocent blood  
 Defyld those sacred waves, it rightly hot<sup>1</sup>  
 The Well of Life; ne yet his vertues had forgot.'

*The Faery Queene*, i. 11. 29.

The dative and ablative plural of nouns in Saxon was in -um, as *hwile*, while, time; *hwilum*, at whiles, at times. This is the form which we retain in *whilom*, *whilome*. As this can only be illustrated from the elder form of our speech, we will quote one of the proverbs of our Saxon ancestors: 'Wea bið wundrum clibbor,' that is, Woe is wonderfully clinging. Here the idea of *wonderfully* is expressed by the oblique plural of the noun *wonder*, and *wundrum* signifies literally *with wonders*.

To this place we must assign also *often* and *seldom*, as if oft-um and seld-um. The former is somewhat obscure; but of the latter there is less doubt. The simple *seld* is very ancient, and does not appear in the Saxon remains, yet it crops up curiously enough in Chaucer and Shakspeare.

'Selde is the Friday all the weke ylike.'

*Canterbury Tales*, 1541.

i. e. Rarely is the Friday like the rest of the week.

'Aia. If I might in entreaties finde successe,  
 As seld I haue the chance;'

*Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 150.

Historically the adverbs in -meal are datives, though they have now lost their flexion. In Saxon they end in -mælum, as *sticcemælum*, 'stitchmeal,' or stitch by stitch, meaning piece-meal; German *Stück*, piece.

Chaucer has *stoundemele*, meaning 'from hour to hour,' or 'from one moment to another;' German *Stunde*, hour.

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<sup>1</sup> = hight, i. e. was named.

'The life of love is full contrarie,  
Which stoundemele can oft varie.'

*Romaunt of the Rose*, 2304.

'And hardily, this wind that more and more  
Thus stoundemele encreaseth in my face.'

*Troilus and Creseide*, Bk. V. 674.

*flockmel*.

'Only that point his peple bare so sore,  
That flockmel on a day to him they went.'

*The Clerkes Tale*, init.

*limb-meal*.

'Tear her limb-meal.'—*Cymbeline*, ii. 4.

*piecemeal*.

'And, when I would have smitten them, heard a voice,  
"Doubt not, go forward; if thou doubt, the beasts  
Will tear thee piecemeal."' *The Holy Grail*.

438. An instance of accusative formation is in that which has the greatest adverbial vogue, namely the termination *-ly*; as, I gave him sixpence willingly. In present English this termination is identical in form with the adjectival *-ly*, but in Saxon the forms differed, the adjectival being *-lic* and the adverbial *-lice*; by a difference which signalised the adverbs all through the language. This *-e* was the sign of an old accusative neuter, as in Latin we have the adverb *multum*.

When we consider how much has been absorbed in this adverbial termination, we can understand why the last syllable of the adverb in *-ly* was pronounced so full and long down to the sixteenth century; as the following shews:—

'Ye ought to be ashamed,  
Against me to be gramed;  
And can tell no cause why,  
But that I wryte trulye.'

Skelton, *Colyn Clout*.



And so when this adverbial *-ly* was superadded to the adjectival, the latter shrank into tonelessness, as *comelely* in *Blaunche*, 848.

439. This adverbial form has become so exceedingly prevalent above all others, as almost to eclipse them and cause them to be forgotten: while, moreover, the great dominance of this form as an adverb has cast a sort of shadow over the adjective of the same form. Sometimes the two functions come into an uncomfortable collision with one another; as, 'Their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed,' where the first *ungodly* is an adjective and the second an adverb.

Occasionally indeed this blending may carry something of that dignity which is peculiar to archaism, as in the following use of

*kingly*.

'We can distinguish easily enough between the morality of David's forbearance, on two occasions, to take the life of Saul, and of his command to Solomon to punish Shimei, whom he had rashly perhaps but *kingly* forgiven.'—James Augustus Hessey, *Boyle Lectures*, Second Series, Lecture ii.

but as a general rule it is better to keep these two functions well apart, and not to say, for instance, of the father of Goethe, that he was 'passionately orderly.'

440. What was said in the last section about social adjectives, applies also to adverbs, though in a more superficial way. Adverbs do not root themselves so firmly as adjectives do. In the last generation a marked social adverb was *vastly*: thus, in *Mansfield Park*, when Edward was resolute that 'Fanny must have a horse,' we read:—

'Mrs. Norris could not help thinking that some steady old thing might be found among the numbers belonging to the Park, that would do *vastly* well.'

At the present moment it may be said that *awfully* is the adverb regnant. 'How do?' 'Awfully jolly, thanks.'

441. *Verily* is an adverb in which a French base has received a Saxon formative. This adverb is a memorial of the bi-lingual period of our language. It has not undergone the usual process of formation through an adjective. There has never been an adjective *verily*; but the termination *-ly*, as the English sign of adverbiality, has supplanted the French adverbial termination *-ment*. *Verily* is our substitute for the French *vraiment*, Italian *veramente*, Latin, or rather Roman, *verâ mente*. It is curious to observe that the Romanesque languages should have taken the word for 'mind' as the material out of which they have moulded a formula for the adverbial idea; while the Saxon equivalent has grown out of the word for 'body;' *lic* being 'body,' German *Leib*.

*chiefly.*

'Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like seasoned timber, never gives;  
But though the whole world turn to coal,  
Then chiefly lives.' George Herbert.

442. Before we pass from this, one of the most dominant forms of our language, we may glance for a moment at the feeling and moral effects with which it is associated. As the substantive is the most necessary of words, so the adverb is naturally the most decorative and distinguishing. And as it is easiest to err in that part of your fabric which is least necessary, so a writer's skill or his incapacity comes out more in his adverbs than in his substantives or adjectives. It is no small matter in composition to make your adverbs appear as if they belonged to the statement, and not as mere arbitrary appendages. Hardly anything in speech gives greater satisfaction than when the right adverb is put in the right place.

'Dickens, describing the conversation of two men at a funeral as they discuss the fate or prospects of various neighbours, past and present, says,

with one of his happiest touches, that they spoke as if they themselves were "notoriously immortal."

How happy is this 'notoriously'! how delicately does it expose that inveterate paradox of self-delusion whereby men tacitly assume for themselves an exception from the operation of general laws! How widely does this differ from the common tendency to be profuse in adverbs, which is a manifestation of the impotent desire to be effective at little cost. The following is not a strong example, but it will indicate what is meant:—

'Most heartily do I recommend Mr. Beecher's sermons . . . they are instructively and popularly philosophical, without being distractingly metaphysical,'—*The Pulpit Analyst*.

443. As in art the further an artist goes in embellishment the more he risks a miscarriage in effect, so it is in language. It is only the master's hand that can safely venture to lay on the adverbs thick. And yet their full capability only then comes out when they are employed with something like prodigality. When there is a well-ballasted paragraph, solid in matter and earnest in manner, then, like the full sail of a well-found ship, the adverbs may be crowded with glad effect. In the following passage how free from adverbs is the body of the paragraph; and when we come to where they are lavishly displayed at the end, we feel that the demonstration is justified. If we quoted only the termination of this passage, the adverbs would lose their *raison d'être*.

'I believe the first test of a truly great man is his humility. I do not mean by humility, doubt of his own power, or hesitation in speaking his opinions; but a right understanding of the relation between what *he* can do and say, and the rest of the world's sayings and doings. All great men not only know their business, but usually know that they know it; and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them; only, they do not think much of themselves on that account. Arnolfo knows he can build a good dome at Florence; Albert Durer writes calmly to one who had found fault with his work, "It cannot be better

done;" Sir Isaac Newton knows that he has worked out a problem or two that would have puzzled anybody else;—only they do not expect their fellow-men therefore to fall down and worship them; they have a curious under-sense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not *in* them, but *through* them; that they could not do or be anything else than God made them. And they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet, and are endlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful.<sup>1</sup>

The author of *Friends in Council*, describing, and at the same time illustrating, what a weighty sentence should be, though he says nothing about the distribution of the adverbs, has nevertheless determined that point in the most effectual manner:—

'*Sir Arthur*. Pray lay down the lines for us, Ellesmere. . . . Pray tell us what a weighty sentence should be.

*Ellesmere*. It should be powerful in its substantives, choice and discreet in its adjectives, nicely correct in its verbs: not a word that could be added, nor one which the most fastidious would venture to suppress: in order lucid, in sequence logical, in method perspicuous; and yet with a pleasant and inviting intricacy which disappears as you advance in the sentence: the language, throughout, not quaint, not obsolete, not common, and not new: its several clauses justly proportioned and carefully balanced, so that it moves like a well-disciplined army organised for conquest: the rhythm, not that of music, but of a higher and more fantastic melodiousness, submitting to no rule, incapable of being taught: the substance and the form alike disclosing a happy union of the soul of the author to the subject of his thought, having, therefore, individuality without personal predominance: and withal there must be a sense of felicity about it, declaring it to be the product of a happy moment, so that you feel it will not happen again to that man who writes the sentence, or to any other of the sons of men, to say the like thing so choicely, tersely, mellifluously, and completely.'—*Realmab*, ch. vii.

444. Unless thus used, with skill and discretion, the cumulation of the formal adverb is apt to generate fulsomeness. Ordinarily it will not bear a very heavy charge; and when the weightiest demonstrations of this kind have to be made, it is found by experience that the requisite display of adverbiality is accomplished with another sort of instrument.

As a bridge from this section to the next, the words from

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<sup>1</sup> Divers friends have enquired after the author of this quotation, and I have been obliged to declare myself as ignorant as my correspondents. I shall be thankful to any one who will supply me with the reference.

2 Cor. ix. 7, 'not grudgingly or of necessity,' will do very well. Or the following line from *The Man of Lawes Tale*, where, be it said in passing, the first word consists of four syllables:—

‘Solempnely with every circumstance.’

Instances of this kind are very frequent, in which an adverb of the formal kind is coupled with one of the phrasal, to the consideration of which we now proceed.

### 3. *Of the Phrasal Adverb.*

**445.** The Phrasal Adverb is already considerably developed, and it is still in course of development; but it attracts the less attention because the thing is going on under our eyes. As the general progress of our language involves the decay of flexion and the substitution of symbolic words in its place, so this alteration befalls particular groups of words more or less, in proportion to the degree of their elevation and consequent exposure. The substantive, which is the primary presentive, and which lies at the base of the rest, is naturally least affected; while the adverb, which is the tertiary or topmost presentive, is the most exposed to the innovations of symbolism.

This expansion of the language seems to call for a corresponding enlargement in the sense of such a term as ‘adverb.’ If *willingly* is an adverb in the sentence ‘I gave him sixpence willingly,’ then what am I to call the phrase ‘with a good will,’ if I thus express myself, ‘I gave him sixpence with a good will’? In its relation to the mind this phrase occupies precisely the same place as that word; and if a different name must be given on account of form only, our terminology will need indefinite enlargement while it represents only superficial distinctions. I would rather

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call them both adverbs, distinguishing them as Flexional and Phrasal. Often we see that we are obliged to translate a flexional Greek adverb by a phrasal English one; thus—*παιδιόθεν*, Mark ix. 21, *of a child*; *ἀληθώς*, John vii. 40, *of a truth*; *ὁμοθυμαδόν*, Acts ii. 1, *with one accord*; *ἀπερισπάστως*, 1 Cor. vii. 35, *without distraction*; *ἀδιαλείπτως*, 1 Thess. v. 17, *without ceasing*.

446. Genitival forms of the adverb having ceased to grow in the language, their place is supplied by the formation of phrasal adverbs with the symbol *of*; as, *of a truth*, *of necessity*, *of old*.

*of old.*

‘And all be vernal rapture as of old.’

*Christian Year*, Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

As in the modern action of the language prepositions have generally taken the place of oblique cases, so the symbol *of* has taken the place of the genitival flexion. Instead of *evenings* and *mornings* (435) we may say

*of an evening, of a morning.*

‘All indeed have not time for much reading; but every one who wishes it, may at least manage to read a verse or two, when he comes home of an evening, and of a morning before going to work.’—Augustus William Hare, *Sermons to a Country Congregation*, ‘Use the Bible.’

447. In like manner *by* supplies the place of the old instrumental case *-um*. The adverbs in *-meal* were, as above stated, old datives, and hence they long continued, and some few still continue to stand alone, without the aid of a preposition. But in the following quotation the preposition compensates for the obsolete termination.

In the *Book of Curlesye*, of the fifteenth century, the ‘childe’ is advised to read the writings of Gower and Chaucer and Occleve, and above all those of the immortal Lydgate; for eloquence has been exhausted by these; and

it remains for their followers to get it only by imitation and extracting—*by cantelmele*, by scraps, extracts, quotations:—

‘There can no man ther fames now disteyne:  
 Thanbawmede tounge and aureate sentence,  
 Men gette hit nowe by cantelmele, and gleyne  
 Here and there with besy diligence,  
 And fayne wold riche the crafte of eloquence;  
 But be the glaynes is hit often sene,  
 In whois feldis they glayned and have bene.’

Oriel MS., E. E. T. S., Extra Series, iii.

**448.** When we consider the greater range of prepositions as compared with case-endings, we see that this phrasal stage of the adverb constitutes a great addition to the faculties of the language, especially as the more rudimentary forms are largely retained in use along with the more explicit. So numerous are the adverbial phrases in use that we cannot attempt a full list of them; the following examples will remind the student of a vast number that are unmentioned:—*at best, at intervals, at large, at least, at length, at most, at random, at worst; in earnest, in fact, in good faith, in jest, in truth, in vain.*

*at present.*

‘But at present we may accept these simple laws without going further back.’—Alfred Russel Wallace, *Creation by Law*.

*at last.*

‘So that one may scratch a thought half a dozen times, and get nothing at last but a faint sputter.’—James Russell Lowell, *Fireside Travels*, 1864, p. 163.

*in jest.*

‘We will not touch upon him ev’n in jest.’

Alfred Tennyson, *Enid*.

*with confidence, with consternation, with disorder.*

‘After a skirmish in the narrow passage, occasioned by the footman’s opening the door of the dismal dining-room with confidence, finding some one there with consternation, and backing on the visitor with disorder, the visitor was shut up, pending his announcement, in a close back parlour.’—Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, ch. x.

*In presence* (French *en presence*), *in existence*.

'The only antagonist in presence . . . came to be treated as the only antagonist in existence.'

The phrasal adverb *in fact* has of late been sometimes modified to *in effect*, after the French *en effet*.

*without effort and without thought*.

'When I contemplate natural knowledge squandering such gifts among men, the only appropriate comparison I can find for her is, to liken her to such a peasant woman as one sees in the Alps, striding ever upward, heavily burdened, and with mind only bent on her home; but yet, without effort and without thought, knitting for her children.'—T. H. Huxley, *Lay Sermons*.

Phrasal Adverbs combine cumulatively with the elder forms, and often with a forcible result. With the flexional, as 'in an instant suddenly.' With the flat, as

*sudden in a minute*.

'Let no man think that sudden in a minute

All is accomplished and the work is done;—

Though with thine earliest dawn thou shouldst begin it,

Scarce were it ended in thy setting sun.'

Frederick W. H. Myers, *St. Paul*.

**449.** A phrasal adverb which has coalesced into one vocable, is that which is formed with the *a*-prefix, as *abed*, *afar*, *afield*, *afoot*, *agog*, *along*, *aloud*, *apiece*, *aright*, *awork*. In our earlier printed literature, and down to the close of the sixteenth century, this adverb is printed in two vocables, as *a good* (270):—

*a right*.

'They turne them selues, but not a right, & are become as a broken bowe.'—Miles Coverdale, *Hosea* vii. 16.

I derive this *a* not exclusively, but for the most part, from the French preposition *à*; thus *afoot* represents *à pied*.



450. Another form of the phrasal adverb is where a noun is repeated with a preposition between, as *day by day*, *bridge by bridge*, *from hour to hour*, *wave after wave*.

‘And then the two  
Dropt to the cove, and watched the great sea fall,  
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,—’

Alfred Tennyson, *The Coming of Arthur*.

‘Not to be crost, save that some ancient king  
Had built a way, where, link’d with many a bridge,  
A thousand piers ran into the great Sea,  
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge.’

Id. *Holy Grail*.

451. Room enough must be given to the term ‘adverb’ to let it take in all that appertains to the description of the condition and circumstances attendant upon the verbal predication of the sentence. If I say, ‘I gave him sixpence with a good will,’ and if the phrase ‘with a good will’ is admitted to a place among adverbs, then there is no reason to exclude any circumstantial adjunct, such as, *with a green purse*, or *without any purse to keep it in*. If any one objects to this as too vague a relaxation of our terminology, I would propose that for such extended phraseological adverbs we adopt the title of Adverbiation. Such a term would furnish an appropriate description for the relative position of a very important element in modern diction. At the close of the following quotation we see a couple of phrases linked together, which would come under this designation :—

‘I had a very gracious reception from the Queen and the Prince Consort, and a large party of distinguished visitors. The affability and grace of these exalted personages made a deep impression on me. It might be copied by some of our grocers and muffin-bakers to their great improvement, and to the comfort of others surrounding them.’—*The Public Life of W. F. Wallcut, the Queen’s Jester*, 1870.

452. If the study of grammar is ever to grapple with the facts of language, one of two things must take place : either

we must make a great addition to the terminology, or we must invest the present terms with a more comprehensive meaning. If the ancient terms of grammar were the result of mature and philosophical thought, and if they at all reflected those mental phases which must necessarily underlie all highly organized speech, then they will naturally and without suffering any violence bear continual extension, so as still to cover the phenomena of language under the greatly altered conditions of its modern development. A multiplication of terms is not in itself a desirable thing in any method; and least of all in one that holds a prominent place in educational studies.

One of the best tests of the soundness of a system hinges on this—Whether it will explain new facts without providing itself with new definitions and new categories. The multiplication of names and classes and groups is for the most part not an explanation at all, but only an evasion of the difficulty which has to be explained. We have, then, explained a new phenomenon, when we have shewn that it naturally belongs to or branches out of some part of the old and familiar doctrine. As therefore it is the condemnation of any system that it should be frequently resorting to new devices, so it is the greatest recommendation when it appears to be ever stretching out the hand of welcome to admit and assign a niche to each newly observed phenomenon.

These remarks are suggested by the stage at which we are now arrived in our delineation of the phrasal adverb. For here we perceive that an opportunity offers itself to explain philologically one of the most peculiar of the phenomena of the English language. That which we call the English infinitive verb, such as *to live*, *to die*, is quite a modern thing, and is characteristic of English as opposed to Saxon. The question, in presence of such a new phenomenon, is naturally

raised,—Whence this form of the infinitive verb? We did not borrow it, for it is not French nor Latin; we did not inherit it, for it is not Saxon. How did it rise, and what gave occasion to it?

453. This question is one that enters into the very interior growth of language, and one that will supply the student of English with an aim for his observations in perusing our earlier literature. I have indeed my own answer ready; but I wish it distinctly to be understood that it is to the question rather than to the answer that I direct attention, and that in propounding this and other problems for his solution, I consider myself to be rendering him the best philological service in my power.

My answer is, that it first existed as a phrasal adverb; that it was a method of attaching one verb to another in an adverbial manner, and that in process of time it detached itself and assumed an independent position. As the fruit of the pine-apple is not the termination of a branch, forasmuch as the plant continues to push itself forward through the fruit and beyond it, so it is with language. The sentence is the mature product of language, but not a terminal or final one, since, out of the extremity of sentences there shoot forth germs for the propagation of new sentences and the projection of new forms of speech.

In the Saxon *Chronicle of Peterborough*, anno 1085, we read: 'Hit is sceame to tellanne, ac hit ne thuhte him nan sceame to donne'—'It is a shame to tell, but it seemed not to him any shame to do.' The Saxon infinitives of the verbs *do* and *tell* were *don* and *tellan*; but here these infinitives are treated as if they were substantives, and put in the oblique case with the preposition *to*, by means of which these verbs are attached abverbially to their respective sentences, which are complete sentences already without these adjuncts. We

must not confuse this case with the modern construction 'to speak of it is shameful,' where the verb is now detached and formed into the modern infinitive, and put as the subject of the sentence. These verbs *to tellanne* and *to donne* I call phrasal adverbs; even as in the modern sentence, 'He has three shillings a week to live on,' I call *to live on* a phrasal adverb.

454. In modern English this adverbial use is eclipsed to our eyes by the far greater frequency of the substantival or infinitive use; but still it is not hard to find instances of the former, and there are two in the close of the following paragraph. Mr. Sargent, pleading for colonies and emigration, says:—

'We are told also that those who go are the best, the backbone of the nation; that the resolute and enterprising go abroad, leaving the timid and apathetic at home. This is not the whole truth. . . . In one sense these are our best men: they are the best to go, not the best to stay.'—*Essays by Members of the Birmingham Speculative Club*, p. 26.

*to do.*

'How convenient does it prove to be a rational animal, that knows how to find or invent a plausible pretext for whatever it has an inclination to do!'—Benjamin Franklin, *Life*.

455. As in French the phrase *à faire*, occurring often in such connection as *quelque chose à faire*, *beaucoup à faire*, something to do, a great deal to do, became at length one vocable, and that a substantive, *affaire*, English *affair*, so likewise in provincial English did *to-do* become a substantive, as in the Devonshire exclamation, 'Here's a pretty to-do!' In place of this *to-do* the King's English accepted a composition, part French, part English, and hence the substantive *ado*.

If it be admitted that *affair* and *ado* are now separate substantives formed from an adverbial phrase, the strangeness of supposing a like origin for our formal English infinitive is much lessened.

The above explanation may be confirmed or corrected by the young philologist; only he should consider in what way the infinitives may appear to have been formed in other languages. It might be worth while to trace the origin of the Danish infinitive, which like ours is phrasal; he should also cast a glance at the flexional infinitives of the Greek and Latin, and see what sort of an account has been rendered of these by the Sanskrit scholars.

By way of reflection upon this trilogy of Adverbs, be it observed, that the subtileness of their utility lies not merely in having the choice of three forms for the fitness of every occasion, though that is a great consideration; but still more in the cumulative power of adverbial expression which they render possible. We have already seen (433 foll.) that the repetition of one cast of adverb is liable to defeat its end, and accordingly when adverbs press for admission more than one at a time, it is of great consequence to provide them each with a several garb. In Micah vii. 3 we read 'That they may doe euil with both hands earnestly;' but if we look at the French Bible (Rochelle, 1616), we find, 'Pour faire mal à deux mains à bon escient,' with adverbial monotony; whereas the English wins a certain force by varying the form of expression.

#### THE NUMERALS.

**456.** The numerals make a little noun-group by themselves, and are (like the chief noun-group) distinguished by the threefold character of substantive, adjective, and adverb.

The distinction between substantive and adjective is not quite so sharp here as in other presentive words. It is however plain that the Cardinals when used arithmetically are substantives, as in *two and two make four*.

The Cardinal has also this aspect when any person or thing is designated as number one, number two, &c., the word 'number' being in the nature of a mere prefix, as is felt when we look at the oblique-cased Latin word which the French use in this connection.

"'En Angleterre," said a cynical Dutch diplomatist, "numero deux va chez numero un, pour s'en glorifier auprès de numero trois."—Laurence Oliphant, *Piccadilly*, Part v.

Moreover, when the numeral takes a plural form, it must be regarded as a substantive, e. g.

'There are hundreds of genuine letters of Mary Queen of Scots still extant.'—John Hosack, *Mary Queen of Scots and her Accusers*, p. 198.

There is in some languages an abstract substantive which is formed upon Cardinals, and it has a peculiar utility in expressing the more conventional quantities or Round numbers. Thus in French there is *huitaine*, a quantity of eight, which is only used in talking of the *huit jours*, 'eight days' of the week. So they have their *dixaine*, *douzaine*, *quinzaine*, *vingtaine*, *trentaine*, *quarantaine*, *cinquantaine*, *soixantaine*, *centaine*. Of all this we have nothing. Only we have borrowed their word for 'a tale of twelve,' and have anglicised it into *dozen*. Then we have a native substitute for *vingtaine*, not originally a numeral at all, but a word that practically fills the place of one. This is the word *score*, an elongate form of *scar*, meaning a notch on the rind of a stick or some such ledger. Our special use of this word seems to indicate that in the rude reckoning of our ancestors a larger notch was made at every twenty. The following is from *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, within a little of its abrupt termination:—

"'I like," says Mr. Datchery, "the old tavern way of keeping scores. Illegible, except to the scorer . . . Hum; ha! A very small score this; a poor score!"

He sighs over the contemplation of its poverty, takes a bit of chalk from

one of the cupboard-shelves, and pauses with it in his hand, uncertain what addition to make to the account.

"I think a moderate stroke," he concludes, "is all I am justified in scoring up;" so, suits the action to the word, closes the cupboard, and goes to bed.

457. When used numerically, as *two stars, three graces, four seas, five senses*, then the numerals are assimilated to adjectives.

But while we trace in the functions of the numeral a broad and general resemblance to the distinctions which mark the nounal group, we should just notice that there is not in thought the same adjectival character in the numeral as there is in the nounal group. If I say *bright stars, fabled graces, uncertain seas, receptive senses*, these adjectives have the same relation to their substantives, whether those substantives be taken in the plural or in the singular. Whereas the numerals *two, three, four, five*, belong to their substantives only conjointly and not severally. It may have been a dim sense of this difference that caused the vacillation which has appeared in language about the adjectival declension of numerals. In Saxon the first three numerals were declined. Thus, *þreo* is genitive of *þreo*: 'Þis is þæra þreo hida land gemære.' 'This is the land-meer of the three hides.' (A.D. 974.)

458. This group is exceedingly retentive of antiquity. Not only is there a radical identity in the numerals throughout the Gothic family, but these again are identical with the numerals of other families of languages. This indicates a very high antiquity. We may illustrate this fact by comparative tables. First, we will compare the different forms assumed by the numerals in some of the chief branches of our own Gothic family, and then we will pass beyond that limit and take into our comparison some of the most illustrious languages of the Indo-European stock.

# THE TALE OF CARDINAL NUMBERS IN

| Mæso-Gothic.           | Anglo-Saxon.                        | English.               | Icelandic.      | Danish.           | German.             |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| ain                    | ân                                  | one                    | einn            | een               | ein                 |
| twai                   | twa, twegen                         | two, twain             | tveir, tvennir  | to, tvende        | zwei, zweien        |
| threis                 | threo                               | three                  | thrir           | tre               | drei                |
| fidwor                 | feower                              | four                   | sjórir          | fire              | vier                |
| fimf                   | fif                                 | five                   | fimm            | fem               | fünf                |
| sahs                   | six                                 | six                    | sex             | sex               | sechs               |
| sibun                  | seofon                              | seven                  | sjuu            | syv               | sieben              |
| ahtau                  | eahta                               | eight                  | átta            | aatte             | acht                |
| nion                   | nigon                               | nine                   | niu             | ni                | neun                |
| taihun                 | tyn                                 | ten                    | tíu             | ti                | zehn                |
| ainlif                 | endlufon                            | eleven                 | ellifu          | elleve            | elf                 |
| twalif                 | twelf                               | twelve                 | tólf            | tolv              | zwölf               |
| threis-taihun          | threotyne                           | thirteen               | threttán        | tretten           | dreizehn            |
| fidwor-taihun          | feowertyne, &c.                     | fourteen, &c.          | sjórtán         | fjörten           | vierzehn            |
| twai-tigjus            | twentig                             | twenty                 | tuttugu         | tyve              | zwanzig             |
| ...                    | an and twentig, &c. twenty-one, &c. | an and twenty-one, &c. | tuttugu ok einn | een og tyve       | einundzwanzig       |
| threis-tigjus          | thrittig                            | thirty                 | thrirtigir      | tredive           | dreißig             |
| fidwor-tigjus          | feowertig                           | forty                  | sjórtigir       | fyrretve          | vierzig             |
| fimf-tigjus            | fiftig                              | fifty                  | fimmtigir       | halvtredsindstyve | fünfzig             |
| sahs-tigjus            | sixtig                              | sixty                  | sextigir        | tresindstyve      | sechzig             |
| sibun-téhund           | hund-seofontig                      | seventy                | sjautigir       | halvfjersindstyve | sechzig             |
| ahtau-téhund           | hund-eahtatig                       | eighty                 | áttagir         | firsindstyve      | achtzig             |
| nion-téhund            | hund-nigontig                       | ninety                 | niutigir        | halvfemsindstyve  | neunzig             |
| taihun-téhund or Hund. | Hund or hundte-Hundred ontig        | Hundred & twenty       | hundrað         | hundrede          | hundert             |
| ...                    | hund-twelftig                       | hundred & twenty       | ...             | hundrede og tyve  | hundert und zwanzig |
| twa hunda              | twa hund                            | two hundred            | ...             | to hundrede       | zwei hundert        |
| thrija hunda           | threo hund                          | three hundred, &c.     | ...             | tre hundrede      | drei hundert        |
| thusendi               | thusend                             | thousand               | ...             | tusinde           | tausend             |



459. In consequence of the luxuriant declension of the numerals in Sanskrit, I have followed the authority of Bopp's Grammar for the 'theme' in each case, that is to say, the part of the word which is present or implied in each of the various forms under which it appears in literature.

| SANSKRIT.    | GREEK.          | LATIN.       | LITHUANIAN. | WELSH.             |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|
| eka          | hen             | un           | wien        | un                 |
| dva          | du              | du           | du          | dau                |
| tri          | tri             | tri          | tri         | tri                |
| chatur       | tessar          | quatuor      | kettur      | pedwar             |
| panchan      | pente           | quinque      | penki       | pump               |
| shash        | hex             | sex          | szeszi      | chwech             |
| saptan       | hepta           | septem       | septyni     | saith              |
| ashtan       | okto            | octo         | asztuni     | wyth               |
| navan        | ennea           | novem        | dewyni      | naw                |
| dasan        | deka            | decem        | deszimt     | deg                |
| ekadasan     | hendeka         | undecim      | .. ..       | unarddeg           |
| dvadasan     | dōdeka          | duodecim     | ....        | deuarddeg          |
| trayodasan   | triskaideka     | tredecim     | ....        | triarddeg          |
| chaturdasan  | tessareskaideka | quatuordecim | .. ..       | pedwararddeg       |
| unavinsati   | .. ..           | undeviginti  | ....        | pedwararbymtheg    |
| vinsati      | eikosi          | viginti      | dwideszinti | ugain              |
| trinsat      | triakonta       | triginta     | ....        | deg ar ugain       |
| chatvarinsat | tesseractakonta | quadraginta  | ....        | deugain            |
| panchasat    | pentekonta      | quingaginta  | ....        | deg a deugain      |
| shashti      | hexakonta       | sexaginta    | ....        | trigain            |
| saptati      | hebdomēkonta    | septuaginta  | ....        | deg a thrigain     |
| asiti        | ogdoēkonta      | octoginta    | ....        | pedwarugain        |
| navati       | enenēkonta      | nonaginta    | ....        | deg a phedwarugain |
| • satam      | hekaton         | centum       | szimtas     | cant               |

460. It is in the Ordinal numbers that the numeral more particularly assumes the adjectival character. We retain all the Ordinals in their Saxon form except two, namely, *first* and *second*. *First* rose into its place from the dialects; but *second* was borrowed from the French—a solitary instance among the Numerals, properly so called. The Saxon word

in its place was *other*, a word which has now a pronominal value only. It had this pronominal value in ancient times, in the Old High German *andar* and in the Mæso-Gothic *anthar*. This collateral use it doubtless was which caused our adoption in this single case of a French Ordinal. The Germans also have discarded *ander* from the numeral function probably for the same reason; and they have made a new Ordinal for that place after the prevalent type, *der zweite*.

**461.** Adverbial numerals are such as *once, twice, thrice, four times, &c.*, where it is to be observed that the difference of adverbial form between the first three numerals and their successors is of a piece with the fact that these three were and others were not, or at least not in an equal degree, declinable in Saxon. It is generally found in languages that the earlier numerals are the more liable to flexion. The adverbs *once, twice, thrice*, are in fact genitival forms under a frenchified orthography. In the Ormulum they are spelt thus, *aness, twiʒess, thriʒess*. But even when divested of their French garb, they do not prove to be old Saxon forms. In Saxon times the genitive was not used for this purpose: there was indeed an adverbial *anes* (genitive of *ân*, one) but it meant 'at one,' 'of one accord.' For *once, twice, thrice*, the Saxon was *æne, tuwa, thriwa*. But although our forms are not ancient, their distinctness from the rest of their series is founded upon an ancient distinction. For in the corresponding Saxon series there was a like transition; the next terms were *feower siðon, fif siðon, &c.*

In fact these three numeral adverbs differ from those which follow, because the three Saxon adverbs in their place stood apart in like manner from their successors. But their genitival form is due to the fact that the above-mentioned pronominal *anes* has had the power to stamp its likeness not only on the first of this series, but also on the second and the

third. This may well be seen from the fact that German and Dutch preserve the analogue of *once*, German *einſt*, Dutch *eens*; but these languages have nothing to match *twice*, *thrice*. Further, be it noted, that *once* the numeral is a piece of English as opposed to Saxon, while the true representative of the old pronominal *ānes* survives in the phrase *once on a time*, which is altogether of older lineage than the numeral *once*. The truth of this distinction may be further verified by any one who observes how justly the German *einſt*, *einſt* and Dutch *eens* answer to our *once on a time* and to the Saxon *ānes*, at one, of one accord; whereas they do but partially and somewhat improperly the work of *einmal*, which is the proper German expression for *once* the numeral, or of *eenmaal*, *eene reis*, the analogues in Dutch.

The numerals have been inserted in this place as a sort of appendix to the nounal group, because of their manifest affinity to that group. At the same time, enough has been said to indicate that they have a several character of their own, and that it would be unphilological to let them be absorbed into any class of words whatever.

That this is the proper place for the numerals we conclude not only from their assimilation to the nounal group on the one hand, but also from certain traces of affinity which they bear to the pronouns on the other.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE PRONOUN GROUP.

**462.** WE now cross the greatest chasm in language—the chasm which separates the presentives from the symbolics. So profoundly has this separation been felt by philologists, that some would even regard these two spheres of speech as radically and originally distinct from each other. The consideration of this theory would lead us beyond the track of the present treatise. It is only noticed here as a testimony to the greatness of the distinction between Nouns and Pronouns.

How far they were originally distinct and independent of each other, is a question for minute etymological investigation, and cannot be settled either one way or the other by the measure of current distinctions. It is plain that the most widely severed functions may be discharged by words which have been radically identical.

Professor Müller has in his Lectures (Second Series, 1864) given an excellent illustration of the way in which the one class of words may be transplanted into the place of the other. ‘The pronoun of the first person in Cochín-Chinese is not a pronoun, but means “servant.” *I love* is expressed in that civil language by *servant loves*.’ If the word *servant* in this case is not a pronoun, it is at least in a fair way of

becoming so. Already in English 'your humble servant,' when used playfully as a substitute for *I*, is a pronoun; as much so as *your Honour, your Lordship, your Grace, your Highness, your Majesty*. That all these have passed, or at least are passing, into the region of the symbolic, there can be little doubt. And these recent instances of the transference enable us to conceive how all pronouns may possibly have been generated from nouns.

**463.** The wide difference between nouns and pronouns is equally certain, whatever may become of any etymological theory, inasmuch as it is a difference which depends not upon origin, but upon function. It is not our earliest impression when we first consider a butterfly, that it is a transformed caterpillar; and when we have discovered their identity of origin, we have in no wise removed their difference of function. Although we know that the caterpillar and the butterfly are the same individual, this does not a whit alter the fact that they are two widely different things, and in very different conditions of existence. Should it ever become capable of proof that all the pronouns had sprung from presentive roots, this would not invalidate the statement, that in passing from nouns to pronouns we traverse a wide gulf, and one which can hardly be overrated as the great central valley dividing the two main formations of which language is composed (**230**).

These two great hemispheres of language, which we designate as the Presentive and the Symbolic, which Bopp calls the Verbal and the Pronominal, may with equal propriety and greater brevity be simply called Nouns and Pronouns, for in fact every other part of speech branches out of these two. Of all the parts of speech hitherto noticed, it is the general quality (putting aside a few marked exceptions, such as the symbol verb *to be* and the auxiliaries) that they are

presentive. Of all the parts of speech which remain to be noticed it is the general quality that they are (not presentive but) symbolic.

**464.** And yet we are not come to a dead level of symbolism. There are gradations of this character. The first pronouns that we shall consider, are a class which combine with their symbolism a certain qualified sort of presentive power. How completely the personal pronouns are entitled to the character of symbolic, we have already shewn (246). But here we have to add, that besides the symbolic character, the pronoun *I* (for instance) has also a sort of reflected or borrowed presentiveness, which we will call a sub-presentive power. Though this pronoun has absolutely no signification by itself, yet when once the substantive has been given like a keynote, then from that time the pronoun continues to have, by a kind of delegacy, the presentive power which has been deputed to it by that substantive. We may see the same thing, if we consider the third personal pronoun

*him.*

‘It has been my rare good fortune to have seen a large proportion of the greatest minds of our age, in the fields of poetry and speculative philosophy, such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Schiller, Tieck; but none that I have ever known come near him.’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1831.

If we read this sentence, and ask ‘Who is *him*?’ we acknowledge the two qualities which constitute the substantive-pronoun: for we imply that the word does indicate somebody, and that it does not say who the person indicated is.

*he.*

‘He was a delightful man to walk with, and especially in a mountainous country. He was physically strong, had excellent spirits, and was joyous and boyish in his intercourse with his children and pupils.’—H. C. Robinson, *Diary*, 1842.

This sub-presentive character belongs to the personal pronouns, as if by some right of contiguity to the great presentive body of words which we leave behind us. As we proceed with the catalogue of the pronouns, it will become less and less perceptible, until at length, when the pronoun passes into the conjunction, it entirely fades from the view, and leaves only the pure symbolic essence of speech, whose meaning is so slight as to be imponderable, and whose value for the highest purposes of language is so great as to be almost inestimable.

The pronouns are, as their name signifies, words which are the vicegerents of nouns. Accordingly, they vary in habit and function just in the same manner as nouns vary, and fall naturally into a similar division. This division is therefore into the same three groups as before, viz. I. Substantival, II. Adjectival, III. Adverbial.

## I. SUBSTANTIVAL PRONOUNS.

**465.** These are the pronouns of which, if the reader asked himself what presentive word they symbolise, he must make answer by a substantive. Among these the first in every sense are

### *The Personal Pronouns.*

How ancient these are will best be seen by a comparative table. Most of them will be found to be radically the same in all the languages of the Gothic stock.

The statement would apply much more widely; but we must be on our guard against wandering when we are entering such a 'forest primeval' as that of the pronominal

group. Hear Professor Max Müller on the antiquity of *aham*, which is the Sanskrit form of *I*.

‘It belongs to the earliest formations of Aryan speech, and we need not wonder that even in Sanskrit the materials out of which this pronoun was framed should have disappeared.’

and again,

‘The Sanskrit *aham*, a word carried down by the stream of language from such distant ages, that even the Vedas, as compared with them, are but as it were of yesterday.’—*Lectures*, Second Series, p. 348.

#### 466. *Pronouns of the First Person.*

|                  | GOthic.    | ICELANDIC. | ANGLO-SAXON. | ENGLISH. |
|------------------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|
| <i>Singular.</i> |            |            |              |          |
| Nom.             | ik         | ek         | ic           | I        |
| Gen.             | meina      | min        | min          | ...      |
| Dat.             | mis        | mer        | me           | } me     |
| Acc.             | mik        | mik        | (mec) me     |          |
| <i>Dual.</i>     |            |            |              |          |
| Nom.             | wit        | wit        | wit          | ...      |
| Gen.             | unkara (?) | okkar      | uncer        | ...      |
| Dat. }           | unkis      | okkr       | unc          | ...      |
| Acc.             |            |            |              |          |
| <i>Plural.</i>   |            |            |              |          |
| Nom.             | weis       | wer        | we           | we       |
| Gen.             | unsara     | wâr        | (user) ure   | ...      |
| Dat. }           | unsis      | oss        | us           | us       |
| Acc.             |            |            |              |          |

The point to be noticed here is the paucity of English forms, when these are compared with the elder languages. Practically the difference is made up by the use of words like *of*, *to*, which have many other uses besides their application in this place. So that this is a case of simplification, of economy of form, in the modern as contrasted with the elder languages.



The contrast which the above table exhibits between the English on the one hand, and the ancestral dialects on the other, is very striking. It shows how far we have moved from their condition in regard to an element of language which is justly esteemed among the most constant. This will appear more plainly if we now proceed to compare the same member in French and Italian.

|                  | FRENCH. | ITALIAN. | ENGLISH. |
|------------------|---------|----------|----------|
| <i>Singular.</i> |         |          |          |
| Nom.             | Je      | Io       | I        |
| Gen.             | de moi  | di me    | of me    |
| Dat.             | à moi   | a me     | to me    |
| Acc.             | me      | me       | me       |
| <i>Plural.</i>   |         |          |          |
| Nom.             | nous    | noi      | we       |
| Gen.             | de nous | di noi   | of us    |
| Dat.             | à nous  | a noi    | to us    |
| Acc.             | nous    | noi      | us       |

It is plain that our language has retained its native material throughout this pronoun, but that the shaping of that material is almost entirely copied from the Romance languages. It will not be necessary to take up space with displaying the same fact throughout the pronouns of the second and third person, as it is obvious to any one who has acquired the elements of the Gothic and Romance languages, that the example applies to those cases, and to a great many others which we leave to the young philologist to explore for himself.

#### 467. *The Pronoun of the Second Person.*

|                  | MÆSO-GOTHIC. | ICELANDIC. | ANGLO-SAXON. | ENGLISH. |
|------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|----------|
| <i>Singular.</i> |              |            |              |          |
| Nom.             | thu          | thu        | thu          | thou     |
| Gen.             | theina       | thîn       | thin         | .        |
| Dat.             | thus         | ther       | thé          |          |
| Acc.             | thuk         | thik       | (thec) the } | thee     |

|                | MESEO-GOTHIC. | ICELANDIC. | ANGLO-SAXON. | ENGLISH. |
|----------------|---------------|------------|--------------|----------|
| <i>Dual.</i>   |               |            |              |          |
| Nom.           | jut (?)       | (it) thit  | git          | ..       |
| Gen.           | inkwara       | ykkar      | incer        | ..       |
| Dat.           | inkwis        | ykkar      | inc          | ..       |
| Acc.           | inkwis        | ykkar      | (incit) inc  | ..       |
| <i>Plural.</i> |               |            |              |          |
| Nom.           | jus           | (er) ther  | ge           | (ye) you |
| Gen.           | izwara        | ythar      | eower        | ..       |
| Dat.           | izwis         | ythr       | cow          | } you    |
| Acc.           | izwis         | ythr       | (eowic) eow  |          |

The observations which have been made upon the previous group apply again. The paucity of the modern forms is even more remarkable here, because three out of the four are restricted in use, and *you* alone remains in the ordinary practice of the language. Here again, as in the case of the first pronoun, the blanks of the English column are supplied by a method of expression which we have learned from the French.

#### 468. *The Pronoun of the Third Person.*

The pronoun of the third person is of three genders, and this distinguishes it not only from all other pronouns, but from all the rest of the language. For this, and the few relics of feminine substantives noticed in 383, 384, are all the Gender that remains in the English language. These remnants of the ancient accidence are so pared down, that they rather indicate the two sexes and non-personality than that traditional and inherited mysterious thing which is called grammatical Gender. Almost the only instances of masculine and feminine that the grammarians can muster (beyond sex) are these, 'The sun he is setting,' and 'The ship she sails well.'

This pronoun was in Saxon declined as follows:—

|                                 | MASC.               | FEM.   | NEUT. |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| <i>Singular.</i>                |                     |        |       |
| Nom.                            | he *                | heo    | hit * |
| Gén.                            | his †               | hire   | his   |
| Dat.                            | him †               | hire † | him   |
| Acc.                            | hine                | hi     | hit * |
| <i>Plural (of all genders).</i> |                     |        |       |
| N. and A.                       | hie (hi, hig, heo)  |        |       |
| Gen.                            | hiera (heora, hira) |        |       |
| Dat.                            | him (heom)          |        |       |

If we go through this old declension word by word, seeking in each case the modern equivalent, we find that only three of its members are still perfectly living. They are those which are marked with an asterisk. I call a given word living, not when the mere form is extant, but when that form retains its old animating function. In such a comparison we need not notice the changes of shape, when a word is known to be the same. Thus the difference of spelling between *hire* and *her* is insignificant. But the difference of function must be rigorously weighed, or we shall let the most important distinctions slip unvalued through our fingers. For this reason I have excluded the genitive case singular, feminine, and neuter, as being now dead to us. The neuter *his* no longer exists except in old literature. It has entirely disappeared, and does not even remain in the discharge of any partial or local function. Instances of its use are abundant in Shakspeare (414) and our Bible:—

'They came vnto the yron gate that leadeth vnto the citie, which opened to them of his owne accord.'—*Acts* xii. 10.

Equally extinct is *him*, the dative neuter. The *his* of the genitive masculine is superseded by *of him* except in emphatic positions. The *his* and *her* with which we are most

familiar are no longer genitive cases of a substantival pronoun; they have long ago become adjectival words, and they are called Possessives. I have marked those words with a dagger in the declension, which have a partial continuity with the present English. As to the two dative forms, which are marked as partially surviving in our modern speech, their thread of identical vitality is very attenuated. Not once in a thousand times when *him* or *her* appear as substantive-pronouns, are they to be identified with this dative. We have it in such a rare instance as this :—

‘So they saddled him the asse.’—*I Kings* xiii. 13.

And this is not modern English: we should now say ‘they saddled for him.’ The sort of instance in which the dative *him* or *her* is still in familiar use, is such as this: ‘I gave him or her sixpence.’

Here, as in other cases, the influence of the little words *of* and *to* have come in, through imitation of the French, to give quite a new character to our declension of the pronoun.

#### 469. *The Reflexive Pronoun.*

There was an old Reflexive Pronoun which in Mæso-Gothic was *sik* and *sis*; in Icelandic *sik* and *ser*; and which was radically identical with the Latin *se*, *sibi*. This pronoun remains in full activity in German in the form *sich*; and yet it is almost entirely lost on the Low Dutch side of the Gothic family. There is no relic of it in Anglo-Saxon<sup>1</sup>, nor has it ever cropped up at any later stage of our language, as it has, rather remarkably, in the modern Dutch *zich*.

We supply the place of it by *self*, *selves*; as, *myself*, *thymself*,

<sup>1</sup> Although this reflex Personal pronoun is not found at any stage of our insular branch, yet its Possessive *sin*, equivalent to the Latin *suus*, is found in the early Saxon poetry.

*himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.* This has the advantage of being equally applicable to all varieties of person, whereas *sich* is of the third person only.

Jesús sah Nathanael zu sich kommen.—*Luther's Version.*

'Jesus saw Nathaneel coming to him.'—*Jobn* i. 47.

Here we have to call attention to the fact that the accusative pronoun of all the persons performed for a long period the double office of a direct and of a reflex pronoun. We have now lost this faculty: and we can no longer say, 'Ye clothe you,' as in *Haggai* i. 6, but 'you clothe yourselves.'

'And Elisha said vnto him, Take bowe and arrowes. And he tooke vnto him bowe and arrowes.'—*2 Kings* xiii. 15.

If we compare the Dutch version we shall find a distinction where our version has *unto him* in different senses:—

'Ende Elisa seyde tot hem: Neemt eenen boge ende pijlen: ende hy nam tot sich eenen boge ende pijlen.'

In the following verses we have *them* reflexively:—

'And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

'And they set them vp images and groues in every high hill, and vnder euery greene trec.'—*2 Kings* xvii. 9, 10.

Later in the same chapter we find *themselves*:—

'So they feared the Lord, and made vnto themselues of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.'—*ver.* 32.

Thus, in the sermon preached at the funeral of Bishop Andrewes, we read—

'The unjust judge righted the importunate widow but out of compassion to relieve him.'—*Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology*, Andrewes, v. 274.

The last word corresponds, not to the Latin *eum*, but to

se, and the modern rendering of the passage would be 'The unjust judge righted the importunate widow only out of compassion to (relieve) himself.'

This manner of expressing the reflex pronoun is now only poetical :—

'Mark ye how close she veils her round.'

*Christian Year, Fourth Sunday in Lent.*

470. We will close the subject of the personal pronouns with a brief conspectus of these pronouns as they appear before verbs in some of the most important sister-languages :—

|       | SINGULAR |      |      |     |      | PLURAL |          |       |      |      |
|-------|----------|------|------|-----|------|--------|----------|-------|------|------|
|       | 1st.     | 2nd. | M.   | F.  | N.   | 1st.   | 2nd.     | M.    | F.   | N.   |
| M. G. | ik       | thu  | is   | si  | ita  | weis   | jus      | eis   | ijös | ija  |
| Icel. | ek       | thu  | hann | hon | that | wèr    | thèr     | their | thær | thau |
| Dan.  | jeg      | du   | han  | hun | det  | vi     | I        | de    |      |      |
| Sax.  | ic       | thu  | he   | heo | hit  | we     | ge       | hi    |      |      |
| Engl. | I        | thou | he   | she | it   | we     | (ye) you | they  |      |      |
| Germ. | Ich      | du   | er   | sie | es   | wir    | ihr      | sie   |      |      |
| Dutch | ik       | ..   | hy   | zij | het  | wij    | gy       | zy    |      |      |

The pronoun of the second person singular is lost in Dutch;—it is reserved for intimacy and devotion in German;—in English it is used only towards God. The Germans share this dignified use of the pronoun with us, as a result of religious conditions which have affected both languages alike. The two great Bible-translating nations have naturally, in their veneration for the words of Scripture, made this Hebrew idiom their own. It is only to be wondered at how the Dutch should have done otherwise.

The natural tendency of the western civilization, apart from other influences, would be to shrink from such a use of *thou*. The French have been led by this feeling, and in all addresses to God they use *vous*. It is not, therefore,

from any radical difference, but only from the effect of circumstances, that the western languages are divided in this particular. A sensitiveness as to the social use of the second pronoun is common to all the nations of the West, but it exhibits itself in unequal degrees. We are influenced by it less than any of the other great languages. We have indeed dropped *thou*, but we remain tolerably satisfied with *you*, except when we wish to shew reverence. At such times we are sensible of a void in our speech, unless the personage has a title, as *your Lordship*. Here it is that the pronominal use of *Monsieur* and *Madame* in the French language is felt to be so admirable a contrivance. The substitution of a third-person formula obviates the awkwardness of the second. Most of the great languages have done this. The German has done it in the directest manner by simply putting *ſie*, they, for *ihſr*, you. Not more direct, but much drier, is the (now I imagine rather obsolete) Danish fashion of calling a man to his face *han*, he, as a polite substitute for the second person. It is common in Holberg's plays. In Italian an abstract feminine substantive takes the place of the pronoun of the second person. But the most ceremonious of all in this matter is the great language of chivalry. The philologist who goes no deeper into Spanish, must at least acquaint himself with the formula which it substitutes for the second person. To say *vos*, that is *you*, is with them a great familiarity, or even an insult. At least, in the short form of *os*. Something like this exists in Devonshire, where 'I tell ee what' (*ee* being disrespectfully short for *yee*) is often heard when altercation is growing dangerous. This is just the *yo os digo* of the following vivacious interview.

'The archbishop had remained, while the ambassador was speaking, dumb with anger and amazement. At last, finding his voice, and starting from his seat in fury, he exclaimed :

"Sirrah! I tell you that, but for certain respects, I would so chastise you for these words that you have spoken, that I would make you an example to all your kind. I would chastise you, I say; I would make you know to whom you speak in such shameless fashion."

"Sirrah!" replied Smith, in a fury too, and proud of his command of the language which enabled him to retort the insult, "Sirrah! I tell you that I care neither for you nor your threats."

"Quitad os! Be off with you!" shouted Quiroga, foaming with rage; "leave the room! away! I say."

"If you call me Sirrah," said Smith, "I will call you Sirrah."—J. A. Froude, *Reign of Elizabeth*, v. 66.

Returning to our table, we call attention to an interesting question, namely, What are the affinities of the English *she*? It would seem easiest to identify it with the Mæso-Gothic *si*, the German *sie*, and the Dutch *zij*; only then it is so strange that there should be no trace of it all through the Saxon period. The alternative is to suppose that the feminine demonstrative *seo* (487) has been removed to this place.

### *The Ancient Demonstrative Pronoun.*

471. Here we notice only the ancient Demonstrative *so*, leaving the modern *that* and *this* until we come to the adjectival section. The Saxon form was *swa*, with a rarer poetic form *sę*; and already in the earliest Saxon literature it had lost its independence. Then, as now, it occurred only in composite expressions, as *swa hwa swa*, whoso; *swa hwæt swa*, whatso. These are, however, sufficient to determine its ancient habit, and to indicate from what original all the varieties of *so* and its composite *such* have had their derival.

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<sup>1</sup> "Yo os digo." Sirrah is too mild a word; but we have no full equivalent. "Os" is used by a king to subjects, by a father to children, more rarely by a master to a servant. It is a mark of infinite distance between a superior and inferior. "Dog" would perhaps come nearest to the archbishop's meaning in the present connexion.—Mr. Froude's note.



In the words *whoso*, *whatso*, the *so* is manifestly subordinated, and has lost its accent. This was the result of the elevation of *who*, *what*, with the depression of *so*. Anciently *so* was the leading member, *what* was indefinite and enclitic.

*The Interrogative and Relative Pronouns.*

472. *Who*, *what*, with their inflections, of which we retain only two in their place<sup>1</sup>, namely, *whose* and *whom*, are now both interrogative and relative. But in Saxon they were only interrogative, and not relative. Their change of character took place in the great French period, and was a direct consequence of French example. For that language, in common with all the Romance languages, uses the same sets of pronouns as interrogatives and as relatives.

There are two main sources of Relative Pronouns, namely the Demonstratives and the Interrogatives. In the Gothic family the Relatives spring from the former group, in the Romanesque family from the latter.

The Saxon Relatives accordingly were from the Demonstratives, and we still use *that* as a Relative. It exists as a variant either for *who* or *which*, our French-trained Relatives. Thus we can say 'he, they who' or 'he, they that': also 'the thing that' as well as 'the thing which.' Where we now say *that . . . which*, the Saxon was *that . . . that* (þæt . . . þæt). We have an interesting relic of this demonstrative-relative in our ablative *the . . . the* as, 'the more the merrier.'

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<sup>1</sup> *Why*, *where*, *when*, *whence*, are indeed inflections of *who*, *what*, and they are retained in the language; but they are moved to another place, namely, the company of the adverbs.

'Advice, like snow, the softer it falls the longer it dwells upon and the deeper it sinks into the mind.'—*S. T. Coleridge*.

The change to the Interrogative-Relative is more than superficial; it amounts to a transposition of internal relations in the fabric of our language. This and other organic changes into which we have been led by French example, must certainly be unperceived by those who go on affirming that the influence of French upon English has been only superficial.

473. *Whom* is now used only personally. But there is no historical reason for this, beyond modern usage. Time was when it was used of things as much as *what*, and examples occur in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The following is of the date 1484:—

'Item. I bequethe to the auter of saint John the Baptist and saynt Nicholas the which is myne owen chapell in the parish chirche of Newlonde in the Forest of Dene in whome my body shalbe buried In primis a crosse of silver,' &c.—*The Will of Dame Jane Lady Barre*, in Mr. Ellacombe's *Memoir of Bitton*, p. 47.

Lest it should be supposed that such a use can only be produced from obscure writings, I may mention the *Faery Queene*, in a passage which is quoted above, 158, where *whom* refers to a ship.

*Whose* has long been used of persons only, but there is now a disposition, notably among our historians, to restore its pristine right of referring to things also:—

'The church of Canterbury, as designed and carried out by him, was not one of those vast piles whose building was necessarily spread over several generations. His whole work was done in the space of seven years, a space whose shortness amazed his own generation.'—Edward A. Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, vol. iv. p. 361.

'Hincmar, in his reply, which is worded with the utmost respect, reminds the Pope of the forms of procedure with regard to appeals to Rome, as prescribed by the Council of Sardica, upon whose decrees the practice mainly rested.'—W. Henley Jervis, *The Gallican Church*, vol. i. p. 33.

474. Before quitting this set, it may be interesting to observe that *what* in Anglo-Saxon had a peculiar function as a leading interjection, a usage which is familiar to those who know the dialect of the Lake district. The minstrel often began his lay with *Hwæt!*

The noblest of Anglo-Saxon poems, the *Beowulf*, begins with this exclamation :

‘Hwæt we Gar Dena on gear dagum  
 peod cyninga þrim ge frunon  
 Hu þa æðelingas ellen fremedon.’ ;

*What ho! the tales of year-day trysts,  
 The martial musterings of mighty Gar-Dane kings,  
 And famous feats of arms performed by æthelings.*

Interrogation, appeal, expostulation, admiration, lie very near to one another in the structure of the human mind, and hence we see in many languages an approach to this habit. In Latin there is the rhetorical use of *quid!* in French of *quoi!* and if we would see a situation in which several of those meanings blend inseparably, we may refer to Proverbs xxxi. 2, where the version of 1611 is rigidly literal, while that of 1535 is homely and unconstrained according to wont.

*Miles Coverdale.*

1611.

‘My sonne, thou sonne of my body: O my deare beloued sonne.’ ‘What, my sonne! and what, the sonne of my wombe! and what, the sonne of my vowes!’

There is a *what* of more modern appearance, equivalent to ‘that which,’ embodying both antecedent and relative, specially called into action in the opening of sentences where the French would use ‘Ce que.’ This *what* is an example of the condensing power of the English speech-genius.

‘What we call a simple fact is in great part the product of our judgment, and therefore often of our fancy, working upon very fragmentary data. What we do in observing a fact is to fill in an outline of which only a point

here and there has been actually assigned, an outline therefore which may be no more obligatory than the shapes of the constellations on a celestial globe.'—J. Venn, *Hulsean Lectures for 1869*, p. 13.

*The Indefinite Pronouns.*

475. We have yet a set of pronouns to mention before closing this section; namely, the Indefinite. The chief of these was in the Saxon period a symbolised *man*, like the indefinite pronoun in German (33). It should also be noticed that the French *on* is only a form of *homme*, in which the spelling has varied with the sublimation of the meaning. This indefinite *man*, or, as it was oftener written, *mon*, we lost at an early date, in the great shaking that followed the Conquest; but it is so natural a word for a pronoun to grow out of, that we do, from time to time, fall as if unconsciously into this use. In the following quotation from Mark viii. 4, *a man* is a manifest pronoun; the Greek is *δυνήσεται τις*. To show the pedigree of the expression in this place, three versions are put side by side:—

*Wiclif*, 1389.

'Wherof a man schal  
mowe fille hem with  
looues here in wildir-  
nesse?'

*Tyndale*, 1526.

'From whence myght  
a man suffyse them with  
breed here in the wyl-  
dernes?'

*The Bible of 1611.*

'From whence can a  
man satisfie these men  
with bread here in the  
wildernes?'

476. This is, however, but a feeble example of the pronominal use of the word *man*, a use which it has been our singular fortune to lose after having possessed it in its fulness. In place of it, we resort to a variety of shifts for what may justly be entitled a pronoun of pronouns, that is to say, a pronoun which is neither *I* nor *we* nor *you* nor *they*, but which may stand for either or all of these or any vague commixture of two or three of them. Sometimes we say 'you' not meaning, nor being taken to mean *you*

at all, but to express a corporate personality which quite eludes personal application.

'It is always pleasant to be forced to do what you wish to do, but what, until pressed, you dare not attempt.'—Dean Hook, *Archbishops*, vol. iii. ch. 4.

This *you* is often convenient to the poet as a neutral medium of address, applicable either to one particular person, or to all the world:—

'Yet this, perchance, you'll not dispute,—  
That true Wit has in Truth its root,  
Surprise its flower, Delight its fruit.  
Or haply, this may be more clear,  
The pirouette of an Idea;  
Which, just as you conclude your grasp,  
Slips laughing from your empty clasp,  
Presenting in strange combination  
Some ludicrous association;  
Which you repel with indignation,  
But cannot find its confutation:—  
I know no other idea fit  
To tell you what I mean by Wit.'

W. M. A. in *The Spectator*, July 2, 1870.

Sometimes, again, it is *we*, and at other times it is *they* which represents this much-desired but long-lost or not-yet-invented 'representative' pronoun. We render the French *on dit* by *they say*.

477. Besides the resort to pronouns of a particular person in order to achieve the effect of a pronoun impersonal, we have also some substantives which have been pronominalised to this effect, as *person*, *people*, *body*, *folk*.

*people*.

'Bothwell was not with her at Seton. As to her shooting at the butts when there, this story, like most of the rest, is mere gossip. People do not shoot at the butts in a Scotch February.'—*Quarterly Review*, vol. 128, p. 511.

'People are always cowards when they are doing wrong.'—M. Manley, *When I was a Boy* (William Macintosh), p. 24.

*body.*

'The foolish' body hath said in his heart, There is no God.'—*Psalm liii. 1*, elder version.

And from this we get the composite pronouns *somebody*, *nobody*, *everybody*, and *a-body*, as little John Stirling, when he saw the new-born calf—

'Wull't eat a-body?'—Thomas Carlyle, *Life*, ch. ii.

In like manner, but less fixed in habit, *some people*, and also *some folk*, as in the well known refrain

'Some folk do, some folk do!'

**478. One.** The first numeral has an intimate natural affinity with the pronominal principle, and this is widely acknowledged in the languages by pronominal uses which are very well known. Some of our pronominal uses of *one* are easily paralleled in other languages, *the one and the other* = l'un et l'autre; *one another* = l'un l'autre. But there is an English use which is far from common, even if it is not absolutely unique; namely, when it is employed as a veiled Ego, thus: 'One may be excused for doubting whether such a policy as this can have its root in a desire for the public welfare;' or, 'One never knows what this sort of thing may lead to.' It would be impossible to put in these places *l'un* or *ein* or *unus* or *είς*.

The *one* of which we speak is quite distinct from those cases in which it is little removed from the numeral, as 'One thinks this, and one thinks that.' In this case *one* is fully toned, but not so in the case referred to, as when a person who is pressed to buy stands on the defensive with, 'One can't buy everything, you know;' here the *one* is lightly passed over with that sensitiveness which accompanies egotism.

There are instances in which one language catches up a confused idea from another, and a mere sound which has been heard will suggest a term totally different in idea from the meaning of that sound. And it is just possible that the French *on* has had some such undefined effect in this member of our language, guiding us through the association of sound to our peculiar use of the first numeral.

This pronoun appears in concord or under government in a manner which it would be hard to parallel in other languages :—

‘As nations ignorant of God contrive  
A wooden one.’ William Cowper, *The Timepiece*.

‘And unto one her note is gay,  
For now her little ones have ranged;  
And unto one her note is changed,  
Because her brood is stolen away.’ *In Memoriam*, xxi.

‘The strictly logical deduction from the premises is not always found in practice the true one.’—Sir J. T. Coleridge, *Keble*, p. 388.

**479.** A variety of other pronouns belong to this set, which we have only space just to hint at. Such are *thing*, *something*, *everything*, *nothing*; *wight*, *whit*, *deal*.

**None** is the negative of *one*. Originally adjectival, and used before consonants and vowels alike, it was shortened to *no* before consonants, and *none* continued in use only before vowels: as, ‘There is none end of the store and glory,’ Nahum ii. 9; ‘There was none other boat there,’ John vi. 22. This is now obsolete, and the form *none* is only used substantivally, as ‘I have none.’

**Ought** or **aught**, from Saxon AWUHT, a composite of *wight* or *whit*. It is now little used.

‘He asked him, if hee saw ought.’—Mark viii. 23.

‘And when ye stand, praying, forgiue, if ye haue ought against any.’—Mark xi. 25.

We have thus reached the natural termination of this section. Having started from the pronouns which were most nearly associated with substantival ideas, we have reached those whose characteristic it is (as their name conveys) to be indefinite, to shun fixed associations, and thus to be ever ready for a latitude of application as wide as the widest imaginable sweep of the mental horizon.

## II. ADJECTIVAL PRONOUNS.

480. This section will run parallel to the former, so far as such an arrangement is practicable without unnatural dislocations. The more subtle quality of pronouns, as compared with nouns, is the cause of a more ready transition from the substantival to the adjectival function, and reversely.

### 481. *The Possessive Pronouns.*

These were a genitival shoot from the personal pronouns which became, some more some less, adjectival : those which became most so were the possessives of the first and second persons.

These have, in the earlier stage of the language, had a complete adjectival development, and full means of concord with substantives; and this began to be the case in some measure even with *his*, of which we meet with a plural *hise* (disyllabic), as in the following broken Saxon from the year 1123, in the Peterborough Chronicle :—

‘ Ða sone þær æfter sende se kyng *hise* write ofer eall Engla lande. and bed *hise* biscopas and *hise* abbates and *hise* þeignes ealle þet hi scolden cumen to his gewitene mot on Candel messe deig to Gleaw ceastre him togeanes.

*Then soon thereafter sent the king his writs over all England, and bade his bishops and his abbots and his thanes all, that they should come to his Witenagemot on Candelmas day at Gloucester to meet him.*



All the possessives were originally genitives of the personal pronouns, of which some reached greater perfection in adjectival form than others.

|       |                 |    |            |                |
|-------|-----------------|----|------------|----------------|
| MIN   | the genitive of | IC | has become | MINE and MY.   |
| FIN   | "               | FU | (thou)     | THINE and THY. |
| URE   | "               | WE | "          | OUR.           |
| EOWER | "               | GE | (ye)       | YOUR.          |

We have now entirely lost that use of MIN or MINE which made it equivalent to *of me*, but the Germans retain this archaic member in *gedenke mein*, think of me.

**482.** Besides the four adjectival pronouns thus generated from the first and second pronouns, there are four more that have sprung from the third person, namely, *his*, *her*, *their*, and *its*. The last of these is a comparative modernism in the language.

Out of these again there branches a group of forms, delicately but essentially distinct. Intimately related to the adjectival possessives, they cannot be separated in our description, though their function is substantival. Even amongst the presentive nouns we find substantives becoming adjectives and adjectives substantives: and therefore we need not wonder if in the more subtle region of the pronoun this should happen still more intricately. We have chosen the functional as our principle of arrangement, but we must not carry it out so rigidly as to sever intimate affinities.

**483. mine, thine.** These forms were originally adjectival, but they have gradually become substantival; while the reduced *my*, *thy*, occupy the old domain. When the *n* was first dropped, it was because the following word began with a consonant, and then the difference between *mine*, *thine*, and *my*, *thy*, was like that between *an* and *a*, *none*

and *no*. In Chaucer's verse we find the *n*-form unremoved before consonants, as—

'Myn purchas is the effect of al myn rente.'

*Canterbury Tales*, 7033.

But in his prose he was more familiar, and we find *my*, *thy*, before consonants in the opening sentences of the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*:—

'Litell Lowys my sone, I haue perceiued well by certeyne evidences thine abilite to lerne sciencez touchinge noumbres & proporciouns; & as wel considere I thy bisi preyere in special to lerne the tretis of the astrelabie.

But considere wel, that I ne vsurpe nat to haue fownde this werk of my labour or of myn engin. I nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens, and haue hit translated in myn englissh only for thi doctrine; and with this swerd shal I slen envie.'—ed. W. W. Skeat, pp. 1, 2.

And so it continues in the Bible of 1611:—

'Thou didst ride vpon thine horses, and thy charets of saluation.'—Habakkuk iii. 8.

**484. Ours, yours, hers, theirs.** In these cases the substantival possessive is made by the cumulative addition of the *s* genitival to its previously genitival termination. For this *s* the rustic speech-sense substitutes its old rival *n*; and hence the uniform series of substantival possessives, *mine*, *thine*, *hisen*, *hern*, *ourn*, *yourn*, *theirn*, current among a large mass of the purest English folk.

**His.** This is the only one of the possessives that has no variation of form for the substantival function—at least, not in the literary language.

'I would rather abide by my own blunders than by his.'—Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ch. vi.

**485. Its.** This form is now never used substantivally, but I imagine that its first appearance in the language was

in the train of *hers, ours, yours, theirs*; and it bears such a character at its earliest appearance.

‘Each following day  
Became the next dayes master, till the last  
Made former Wonders, it’s.’—*Henry VIII.*, i. 1. 16.

This obsolete use seems to have preceded the adjectival use of *its*, and indeed to have been the introducer of the latter<sup>1</sup>.

It seems as if children in Shakspeare’s time used *it* for the adjectival possessive; for in the following passage Constance mimics childish prattle:—

‘*Queen.* Come to thy grandame, child.  
*Cons.* Doe childe, goe to yt grandame childe,  
Giue grandame kingdome, and it grandame will  
Giue yt a plum, a cherry, and a figge,  
There’s a good grandame.’—*King John*, ii. 1. 159.

*The Demonstrative Pronouns, and the Definite Article.*

**486. Such** is a composite word, made up of *so* and *like*. The Saxon form was *swilc*, from *swa* and *lic*. In the German form *solch* the original elements are very traceable: in Danish it is *slig*, and in Scottish *sic*. It is curious how words rediscover the elements of their composition after they have become obscure, by a tendency to symphytise again once more with the word which they have already absorbed. Thus we get *such-like*; and still more usual in Scotland is *sic-like*. This *such* is a highly pronominal word.

‘In such matters a little evidence goes a long way.’—*Archæological Journal*, No. 104, p. 331.

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<sup>1</sup> This distinct recognition of the substantival as against the adjectival in possessive pronouns, is something (as I apprehend) peculiar to modern languages. The distinction is bolder in French than in English, and still more so in German. In French it is *mon, ton, son, notre, votre, leur*, as against *le mien, le tien, le sien, le notre, le votre, le leur*. In German there is a duplicate apparatus for the substantival. As against *mein, dein, &c.*, there is, first, *meiner, deiner, &c.*, and second, *der, die, das meinige, deinige, seinige, eurige, ihrige*.

The pronominal character of *such* is here apparent from the fact that the reader must refer to the page quoted in order to recover the presentive idea towards which it pointed in this passage.

This adjective reverts, like other adjectives, to substantival habits, and it sometimes fills the place which has been left vacant by the ancient substantive-pronoun *so* described in the former section. In its substantive and adjective function alike, it is often the antecedent to a relative pronoun, and there has been a good deal of fastidiousness about this relative pronoun, as to which is the right one to come after *such*. We have now decided (it seems) that *such* can have no relative after it but *as*. And as a proof of the sort of affection that words bear to kindred, it may be noticed that *as* is a composite word made up of *all* and *so*. However, our literature abounds with instances of other relatives after *such*.

*such who.*

'It is very natural for *such who* are treated ill and upbraided falsely, to find out an intimate friend that will hear their complaints,' &c.—Addison (1711), *Spectator*, No. 170.

*such which.*

'Of *such characters* which combined the species best, I selected the most remarkable.'—John Lindley, *A Monograph of Roses*, 1820, p. xx.

**487.** The demonstrative-pronouns *this* and *that* were thus declined in Saxon :—

|           |      | Neut. | Masc. | Fem.  | Neut. | Masc.   | Fem.   |
|-----------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| SINGULAR. | Nom. | thæt  | se    | seo   | this  | thes    | theos  |
|           | Acc. | thæt  | thone | tñā   | this  | thisne  | thás   |
|           | Abl. |       | thy   | thære |       | thise   | thisse |
|           | Dat. |       | tham  | thære |       | thisum  | thisse |
|           | Gen. |       | thæs  | there |       | thises  | thisse |
|           |      |       |       |       |       |         |        |
| PLURAL.   | Nom. |       | thá   |       |       | thás    |        |
|           | Acc. |       |       |       |       |         |        |
|           | Abl. |       | tham  |       |       | thissum |        |
|           | Dat. |       | thara |       |       |         |        |
|           | Gen. |       |       |       |       | thissa  |        |

488. Of these two words, the former was in Saxon the more prominent by far, and we should in reference to that stage of the language not say 'this and that,' but rather 'that and this.'

It was *thæt, se, seo*, which supplied the definite article, and therefore it was current in some one or other of its cases in almost every phrase that was spoken or written. This will make it easier to understand how it should have come about that *thā*, the plural of this demonstrative, took the place of *hi* as personal pronoun of the third person plural (*they*). And, to pursue this transition to its consequences; a place was now vacant, the demonstrative required a plural of its own. Here we have a beautiful example of the innate resource of language, which often is most admirable in this, that a new want is supplied out of a mere nothing. The sister demonstrative *this* had a plural which was grammatically written *thās*, and with this full *ā* it was pronounced so as to be very like our *those*, which is indeed its modern form. But people whose education had been neglected were apt to make a plural in their own way by just adding on a little vague *e* to the singular *this*, so they (the ungrammatical people) made a plural *this-e*. After a certain period of confusion, during which both demonstratives admitted a great variety of shapes, they at last settled down to this, that the word *those*, which was the original old plural of *this*, should pass over to the other side and be the plural of *that*, while *this* should make its plural *these* according to the later popular invention.

489. What was at the root of all this stir appears to have been the newly-felt insufficiency of the distinction between the singular *he* and the plural *hi*. And perhaps it should be added, the want of distinction between the singular dative *him* and the plural dative, also written *him*,

though sometimes *heom*. In the following passage, Mark vi. 48-50, we find *him* three times, and in every case it corresponds to the modern *them* :—

‘And he geseah hig on rewette swincende; him wæs wiðerweard wind : and on niht ymbe þa feorðan wæccan, he com to him ofer þa sæ gangende, and wolde hig forbugan.

þa hig hine gesawon ofer þa sæ gangende, hig wéndon þæt hit unfæle gast wære, and hig clypedon :

hig ealle hine gesawon and wurdon gedrefede. And sona he spræc to him, and cwæð : Gelyfað; ic hit eom; nelle ge eow ondrædan.’

So that, as the English language emerged from its French incubus, it gradually substituted *they*, *their*, *them*, in the place of the elder *hi*, *heora*, *him*. This change was not quite established till far on in the fifteenth century. In Chaucer we have still the elder forms, *hi*, *hir*, *hem*, in free use, or at least the two latter. For the nominative he generally puts *they* :—

‘Vp on the wardeyn bisily they crye,  
To yeue hem leue but a litel stounde,  
To go to Mille and seen hir corn ygrounde :  
And hardiily they derste leye hir nekke,  
The Millere shold noght stelen hem half a pekke  
Of corn by sleighte, ne by force hem reue :  
And atte laste the wardeyn yaf hem leue.’

*The Reves Tale*, 4006.

It may not be amiss to add that when in provincial English we meet with *’em* in place of *them*, it must be regarded as an elided form not of *them*, but of *hem*.

490. These two pronouns have held a great place in our language. We can hardly omit to notice what may be called their rhetorical use. *This* has a rhetorical use expressive of contempt. It was by means of this pronoun that Horne Tooke expressed his contempt for the philology of Harris’s *Hermes* :—

‘There will be no end of such fantastical writers as this Mr. Harris, who takes fustian for philosophy.’—*Diversions of Purley*, Part II. ch. vi.

*That*, on the other hand, is a great symbol of admiration :—

‘The face of justice is like the face of the god Janus. It is like the face of those lions, the work of Landseer, which keep watch and ward around the record of our country’s greatness. She presents one tranquil and majestic countenance towards every point of the compass and every quarter of the globe. That rare, that noble, that imperial virtue has this above all other qualities, that she is no respecter of persons, and she will not take advantage of a favourable moment to oppress the wealthy for the sake of flattering the poor, any more than she will condescend to oppress the poor for the sake of pampering the luxuries of the rich.’—House of Commons, March 11, 1870.

Both of these uses are to be paralleled in Greek and Latin, as the student of those languages should ascertain for himself, if he is not already familiar with the feature.

491. But a more peculiar interest attaches to this pronoun from the circumstance that out of it has been carved the definite article. The word *the* is simply an abbreviation of *that*, on which the French *le* has probably exercised some influence in the way of shaping its form.

And not unfrequently we experience in the course of reading, especially in poetry, a certain force in the definite article, which we could not better convey in words than by saying it reminds us of its parentage, and calls the demonstrative to mind. It is one of those fugitive sensations that will not always come when they are called for ; but perhaps the reader may catch what is meant if the following line from the *Christian Year* is offered in illustration :—

‘The Man seems following still the funeral of the Boy.’

The same thing may however be shown in a manner more agreeable to science. We find cases in which the same text is variously rendered according as the interpreters have seen a demonstrative or a definite article in the original :—

Ezekiel ix. 19.

1535.

1611.

‘That stony herte wil I take out of youre body, & geue you a fleshy herte.’  
 ‘I wil take the stonie herte out of their flesh, and will giue them an heart of flesh.’

492. But there is a case, and that rather a frequent one, in which *the* is not a definite article at all, but either a demonstrative or a relative. It is the ablative case *thy* of the Saxon declension above given, and answers to the Latin *quo*. . . *eo* before comparatives, just as *thæt thæt* in Saxon was equivalent to the Latin *id quod*.

‘The more luxury increases, the more urgent seems the necessity for thus securing a luxurious provision.’—John Boyd-Kinnear, *Woman's Work*, p. 353.

### *Interrogative and Relative.*

493. The adjectival form of this group is **which**, Saxon *hwilc*, composed of *hwi* an old ablative or instrumental case of *hwa*, *hwæt*, our modern *who*, *what*; and the formative *lic*, modern *like*. Thus *which* originally meant *who- or what-like?*

The adjectival *which* had at one time a substantival *the which*, after the example of the French *lequel*, *laquelle*:—

‘I will not ouerthrow this citie, for the which thou hast spoken.’—*Genesis* xix. 21.  
 ‘Je ne subvertirai point la ville de laquelle tu as parlé.’—*La sainte Bible*, Rochelle, 1616.

So in the following beautiful stanza:—

‘Where making joyous feast their daies they spent  
 In perfect love, devoide of hatefull strife,  
 Allide with bands of mutuall couplement;  
 For Triamond had Canacee to wife,  
 With whom he ledd a long and happie life;  
 And Cambel tooke Cambina to his fere,  
 The which as life were to eache other lief.  
 So all alike did love, and loved were,  
 That since their dayes such lovers were not found elsewhere.’

*The Faery Queene*, iv. 3. 52.



It belongs, however, to the nature of imitations that a large proportion of them are short-lived. They differ from the native growth as cuttings differ from seedlings. Only a reduced number gets well and permanently rooted. We proceed to notice an instance of this.

The relative *which*, as a personal relative, is no longer used, and it is a well-known peculiarity of the English of our Bible, that it is so common there. Instances of this use are indeed numerous beyond the pages of that version. The following is from a brass in Hutton Church, near Weston-super-Mare:—

‘Pray for y<sup>e</sup> soules of Thomas Payne Squier & Elizabeth hyis wiffe which departed y<sup>e</sup> xv<sup>th</sup> day of August y<sup>e</sup> yere of o<sup>r</sup> lord god m.ccccc.xxviiij.’

In the following passage Pope put *Whom* as a correction in the place of *Which*:—

‘Welcome sir Diomed, here is the Lady  
Which for Antenor we deliuer you.’

Shakspeare, *Troylus and Cressida*, iv. 4. 109.

Another French-trained faculty was once enjoyed by *which*, but is now obsolete. This was the admiring or exclamative power, like the French *quel, quelle!* In the following instances we should now put *what* instead of *which*:—

‘And which eyen my lady had,  
Debonaire, good, glad, and sad.’

Geoffrey Chaucer, *Blaunce*, 859.

‘But which a visage had she thereto.’ *Id.* 895.

### *Indefinite Pronouns.*

**494. Same.** This word is not found (as a pronoun) in Anglo-Saxon literature, and the question arises whence it

came to be so familiar in English. Jacob Grimm thinks it was acquired through the Norsk language, in which *samr* is a prevalent pronoun. The Saxon word in its place was *ilk*, which is so well known to us through Scottish literature. As however there are traces of its having existed at an earlier stage of Saxon, it is possible that it had never died out, but that, having been superseded by *ilk* in the written language, it had fallen into temporary obscurity. Many genuinely native elements are found in modern English which are unknown in Saxon literature, and it is only reasonable to conclude that the vocabulary of the Saxon literature imperfectly represented the word-store of the nation.

**495. Own.** Saxon *AGEN*, German *eigen*.

**None, no.** *None* is from *ne* and *one*, Saxon *NÁN*. The history of the shortened form of *no* is just the same as that of *my*, *thy*: at first it was a concession to the initial consonant of the following word, thus in the Bible of 1611, 'there was none other boat there,' and 'no man knoweth whence.' At this stage the relation of *none*, *no*, was like that of *an*, *a*; but the former pair did not rest in that condition as the latter did. The form *no* has now occupied all situations where it is adjectival; and *none* is kept for the substantival function: as, 'Have you no other?' 'I have none.'

**Sundry** is an adjectival pronoun founded upon an old Saxon adverb *sundor*, which we still retain in the compound *asunder*.

**496. Each** is from the Saxon *ælc*, having lost its *l*, just as *which* and *such* have. This *ælc* was equivalent to our present *every*, so that the word for 'everybody' was *ælman*, and for 'everything' it was *ælþing*. The spelling *each* is a modernism; in Chaucer it is *ech* and *eche*. This is quite a distinct word from the *ilk* mentioned above.

**Every** grew out of the habit of strengthening *ælc* by prefixing *æfre*, whence arose the composite pronoun *æuer-ælc* or *euer-alc*, which means *ever-each*, and which occurs under a variety of orthographic forms in Layamon. It had become *everych* by Chaucer's time, and then it had attracted to itself another pronoun, namely *one*, and so we get the oft-recurring mediæval form *everychon*. To go no further than the *Prologue*, l. 31 :—

'So hadde I spoken with hem euerichoon  
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon.' Hengwrt MS.

'Idols and abominacions of y<sup>e</sup> house off Israel paytated euerychone rounde aboute the wall.'—Miles Coverdale's Bible, 1535, *Ezechie*l viii. 10.

**497. Very** has retained so much of its old presentive character, that it has brought over with it all the degrees of comparison, and we have in the ranks of the pronouns *very*, *verier*, *veriest*.

'The very presence of a true-hearted friend yields often ease to our grief.'—Richard Sibbes, *Soul's Conflict*, 14.

'In the very centre or focus of the great curve of volcanoes is placed the large island of Borneo.'—Alfred Russel Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago*, ch. i.

A choice illustration may be had from a letter written in 1666 by the wife of the English ambassador at Constantinople to her daughter Poll in England, which Poll has been adopted by a rich relative, and is inclining to vanity<sup>1</sup> :—

'Whereas if it were not a piece of pride to have y<sup>e</sup> name of keeping y<sup>r</sup> maide, she y<sup>t</sup> waits on y<sup>r</sup> good grandmother might easily doe as formerly you know she hath done, all y<sup>e</sup> business you have for a maide, unless as you grow old<sup>r</sup> you grow a verier Foole, which God forbid!'

**Certain** is an adjective which has been presentive not long ago, but it is now completely pronominalised :—

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<sup>1</sup> Of this vain Poll, the great grand-daughter was Jane Austen, and it is in the *Memoir* of the latter, by the Rev. J. E. Austen-Leigh (Bentley, 1870), that this admirable letter has been published.

'At Clondilever, a farmer was returning from his usual attendance at the Roman Catholic Chapel on Sunday, when he was stopped by five men with revolvers, who warned him that if he interfered any further with a certain person as to possession of a certain field,' &c.—April 30, 1870.

**498.** Our last adjectival pronouns shall be *one* and its derivative *only*.

'The only prime minister mentioned in history whom his contemporaries revered as a saint.'—William Robertson, *Charles V*, Bk. I. A.D. 1517.

**One** has already been largely spoken of in the former section, where it was seen to occupy an important place. But its substantival function is after all less important in the development of our language than its adjectival habit; because out of this has grown that member *which is the most distinctive perhaps that can be fixed upon as the mark of a modern language*. The definite article is found in some of the ancient languages, as in Hebrew and Greek, but none of them had produced an indefinite article. The general remark has already been made in an earlier chapter, that it is in the symbolic element we must seek the distinctive character of the modern as opposed to the ancient languages. And we may appeal to the indefinite article as the most recent and most expressive feature of this modern characteristic. In the Greek of the New Testament there are certain indications (known to scholars) of something like an indefinite article.

In its adjectival use this pronoun is generally set in antithesis to *another*; as,—

'Yf one Sathan cast out another.'—*Matt.* xii. tr. Coverdale, 1535.

Out of this has been produced the indefinite article. It has not sprung directly from the numeral *one*, but from that word after it has passed through the refining discipline of a symbolic usage.

The old spelling of the numeral was *æn*; and this ancient

form is preserved in the article *an* or *a*. This gives us occasion to remark that old forms are often preserved in the more elevated functions, while the original and inferior function has admitted changes.

499. Having thus indicated the sources of our two articles, let us observe that they still carry about them the traces of their extraction. The magnifying quality of the demonstrative *that* has been noticed above. Its descendant the definite article retains something of this ancestral quality. We all know how the ceremonious *The* adds grandeur to a name, and how all titles of office and honour are jealously retentive of this prefix.

On the other hand, the indefinite article, which is descended from the littlest of the numerals, exercises a diminishing effect, as in the following:—

‘This little life-boat of an earth, with its noisy crew of a mankind, and all their troubled history, will one day have vanished.’—Thomas Carlyle, *Essays*; Death of Goethe.

These minute vocables are the real ‘winged words’ of human speech; or, to speak with more exactness, they are the wings of other words, by means of which smoothness and agility is imparted to their motion. It is in the articles that the symbolic element of language reaches one of its most advanced points of development; and it is not by means of these alone, but by means of that whole system of words of which these are eminent types, that the modern languages when compared with the ancient are found to excel in alacrity and sprightliness.

### III. ADVERBIAL PRONOUNS.

500. This chapter of pronouns keeps up on the whole a parallel course to the chapter on nouns. Like that, it is divided into three main sections, Substantives, Adjectives,

Adverbs. Moreover, as in that chapter the third section assumed a trifold form, so also here do we find ourselves compelled by the nature of the subject to divide this final section into three paragraphs. In this symbolic as well as in that presentive region, the adverbs assume the three forms of Flat, Flexional, and Phrasal.

### 1. *Of the Flat Pronoun-Adverbs.*

The higher we mount in the structure of language the more delicate a matter it will be to make sharp distinctions. The presentive adverbs pass off by such fine and imperceptible shadings into a symbolic state, that the boundary line must needs be exposed to uncertainty.

The examples which follow may therefore be considered as a continuation of the corresponding group in the section of nounal adverbs, and differing from them only in the degree of sublimation.

**501. Up.** This is clearly a presentive word so long as the original idea of elevation is preserved. But it passes off into a more refined use, a more purely mental service, and then we call it no longer a noun but a pronoun.

The instance of *breaking-up* is an interesting one. It is one of those in which the flat adverb has attached itself very closely to the verb, and has with the verb attained a peculiar appropriation of meaning. This expression now is apt to suggest the holidays of a school-boy, but in the sixteenth century it was the proper expression for burglary:—

‘If a thiefe bee found breaking vp.’—*Exodus* xxii. 2.

‘Suffered his house to be broken vp.’—*Matthew* xxiv. 43.

‘If he beget a sonne that is a breaker vp of a house.’—*Ezekiel* xviii. 10 (margin).

Mr. Froude quotes a letter of the reign of Queen Elizabeth in which a burglary is confessed in these terms:—

'With other companions who were in straits as well as myself, I was forced to give the onset and break up a house in Warwickshire, not far from Wakefield.'—*History*, vol. xi. p. 28.

An old ship is sold 'to be broken up,' and akin to this we find the substantive a *break-up*:—

'The death of a king in those days came near to a break-up of all civil society.'—E. A. Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, ch. xxi.

There is a rich variety of expressions in which *up* figures in the character which belongs here; e.g. to be 'knocked up,' 'done up,' 'patched up,' to be 'up to a thing,' 'up with a person,' 'keeping it up late.'

The verb to *come up* is equivalent to coming into notice, or even into being; and in the following quotation it translates ἐγένετο:—

'As for wisdom what she is, and how she came up, I will tell you.'—*Wisdom of Solomon*, vi. 22.

At length it becomes a mere symbol of emphasis. In Rom. vi. 13, 'yield yourselves unto God,' it is proposed by Bishop Ellicott to restore a certain lost emphasis by the correction, 'yield yourselves up to God.'

**Still.** In the next examples the reader may notice that 'still run' and 'still to move' would be pure stultifications if the word *still* were taken in its original and presentive signification of motionless stillness. This affords a sort of measure of the great change that has passed over the word.

'Having past from my hand under a broken and imperfect copy, by frequent transcription it still run (*sic*) forward into corruption.'—Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, Preface.

'They are left enough to live on, but not enough to enable them still to move in the society in which they have been brought up.'—John Boyd-Kinnear, *Woman's Work*, p. 353.

**502.** The word *rather* may serve as an illustration of the grounds on which we assign these words to the pronominal

category. In an interesting letter from Sir Hugh Luttrell, in the year 1420, we have this word in its presentive sense. He is in France, and he is displeased that certain orders of his have not been carried out, and he hints that if his commands are not fulfilled, he is alive, and 'schalle come home, and that rather than some men wolde,' that is to say, he shall be at home *earlier* than would be agreeable to some people. *Rather* is the comparative of an obsolete adjective *rathe*, which signified 'early.' It is found once in Milton, *Lycidas*, 142:—

'Bring the rathe Primrose that forsaken dies,  
The tufted Crow-toe, and pale Gessamine.'

Now compare the way in which we habitually employ this word, and a plainer example could hardly be found of the distinction between the nature of the noun and that of the pronoun. The word is so common that we can hardly read a paragraph in any daily or weekly article without coming across it, and probably more than once.

'He fails to be truly pathetic because we do not see the agony wrung out of a strong man by the inevitable wrongs and sorrows of the world, but the easy yielding of a nature that likes a little gentle weeping. Mr. Pickwick, with his love of mankind stimulated with a little milk-punch, is not the most elevated type of philanthropy, though it is one which is unfortunately prevalent at the present day. In these respects Mr. Dickens's influence tended rather towards a softening of the moral fibre than towards strengthening it.' —July 16, 1870.

**Too** is an Ablaut-variety of the preposition *to* :

'Spake I not too truly, O my knights?  
Was I too dark a prophet when I said  
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,  
That most of them would follow wandering fires,  
Lost in the quagmire?'      Alfred Tennyson, *The Holy Grail*.

**503.** That famous pronominal factor **so**, which has already been spoken of in both the previous sections, must come in here likewise :—



‘And he was competent whose purse was so.’

William Cowper, *The Time-Piece*.

‘A declaration so bold and haughty silenced them and astonished their associates.’

The presentive idea to which this *so* points back may be found by reference to Robertson’s *Charles the Fifth*, Bk. I. anno 1516, and the abruptness of the clause as it stands gives a measure of the pronominal nature of the adverb *so*.

*further.*

‘Or dwells within our hidden soul  
Some germ of high prophetic power,  
That further can the page unveil,  
And open up the future hour.’

G. J. Cornish, *Come to the Woods, and Other Poems*, lxxiii.

*jump.*

‘In goodness, therefore, there is a latitude or extent, whereby it cometh to pass that even of good actions some are better than other some; whereas otherwise one man could not excel another, but all should be either absolutely good, as hitting jump that indivisible point or centre wherein goodness consisteth; or else missing it they should be excluded out of the number of well-doers.’—Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws, &c.*, I. viii. 8.

‘And bring him iumpe, when he may *Cassio* finde.’

*Otello*, ii. 3. 369.

For this adverb we find *just* substituted, as in the following quotation from the First Folio, where the old Quartos have *jump*:—

‘*Mar.* Thus twice before, and iust at this dead houre,  
With Martiall stalke, hath he gone by our Watch.’

*Hamlet*, i. i. 65.

*just.*

‘How much of enjoyment life shows us, just one hair’s breadth beyond our power to grasp.’—*The Bramleighs*, ch. xxxi.

*solid.*

“‘You don’t mean that!’ “I do, solid!”’ (Leicestershire.)

h h

*how.*

'How dull sermons are, compared with the brilliant compositions which may be read in the newspapers!'—J. Llewellyn Davies, *The Gospel and Modern Life* (1869), p. 218.

*some, much.*

'Suppose a man's here for twelve months. Do you mean to say he never comes out at that little iron door.—He *may* walk some, perhaps:—not much.'—Charles Dickens, in *Foster's Life*, ch. xxi.

It is not necessary to the Flat Adverb that it should consist of a single word, though it generally does so. Such adverbs as *that time, no thyng, the right way, the wrong way, the while* must be placed here.

*that time, no thyng.*

'Ireland þat tyme was bygged no þyng  
Wyþ hous ne toun, ne man wonyng.'

R. Brunne's *Chronicle* (Lambeth MS.).

TRANSLATION.—*Ireland at that time was not-at-all built with house nor town, nor man resident.*

*the right way, the wrong way.*

'The right thing believed the right way must inevitably produce the perfect life. Either, then, the civilised world believes the wrong thing, or it believes the right thing the wrong way.'—Laurence Oliphant, *Piccadilly* (1870), p. 274.

Here we must, at least provisionally, and without speculating on their origin, put the adverbs of affirmation, *yea* and *yes*, Saxon GE and GESE.

The following is from Dr. Bosworth's *Parallel Gospels*, Matthew v. 37:—

| Gothic, 360.                                     | Wycliffe, 1389.                               | Tyndale, 1526.                                            | 1611.                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'Siyaiþ than<br>waurd izwar, Ya,<br>ya; Ne, ne.' | 'But be þoure<br>word þea, þea;<br>Nay, nay.' | 'But your com-<br>municacion shalbe<br>Ye, ye; Nay, nay.' | 'But let your<br>communication bee<br>Yea, yea; Nay,<br>nay.' |

*Matthew xi. 9.*

|                    |                         |                           |                           |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 'Yai, qipa izvis.' | 'þe, I seie to<br>þou.' | 'Ye, I saye vnto<br>you.' | 'Yea, I say vnto<br>you.' |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|

504. Next we come upon a member which is inconsiderable in its bulk, unimposing in its appearance, and which is inconspicuous by the very continuousness of its presence; but yet one which covers with its influence half the realm of language, which involves one of the most curious of problems, and which raises one of the most important questions in the whole domain of philological speculation: I mean the apparatus of NEGATION. It may be out of our reach to attain to the primitive history of the negative particle; but if we are to judge of its source by the track upon which it is found, if origin is to be judged of by kindred, if the unknown is to be surmised by that which is known, it is in this portion of the fabric of speech—namely in the flat pronoun-adverbs—that we must assign its birthplace to the negative particle.

The negative particle in our language is simply the consonant *n*. In Saxon it existed as a word *NE*, but we have lost that word, and it is now to us a letter only, which enters into many words, as into *no, not, nought, none, never*. In French, however, this particle is still extant as a separate word; as ‘*Je ne vois pas.*’

505. The following parallel quotations exhibit this particle both in its simple state, and also in combinations, some familiar, some strange to us:—

*Anglo-Saxon, 995.*

‘*Ne geseah næfre nán man God, buton se án-cenneda sunu hit cýðde, se is on his fæder bearme. And ðæt is Johannes gewitnes, ðá ða Judeas sendon hyra sacerdas and hyra diaconas fram Jerusalem to him, ðæt hí æcsodon hyne and ðus cwædon, Hwæt eart ðú? And he cýðde, and ne wiðsóc, and ðus cwæþ, Ne eom ic ná Crist. And hig æcsodon hine and ðus cwædon, Eart ðú Elias? And*

*Wycliffe, 1389.*

‘*No man euere syȝ God, no but the oon bigetun sone, that is in the bosum of the fadir, he hath told out. And this is the witnessing of John, whanne lewis senten fro Jerusalem prestis and dekenys to hym, that thei schulden axe him, Who art thou? And he knowlechide, and denyede not, and he knowlechide, For I am not Crist. And thei axiden him. What therfore? art thou Elye?*

he cwæþ Ne eom ic hit. Ða cwædon And he seide, I am not. Art thou  
 hī, Eart þū witega? And he and- a prophete? And he answeride,  
 wyrd and cwæþ, Nic.'

*St. John i. 18-21, Bosworth's Gospels.*

506. In Anglo-Saxon the particle *ne* was used not only for the simple negative, as in the above quotation, but likewise as our *nor*: and both of these uses continued to the fourteenth century. Thus, in the *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, Prologue 174:—

'Alle þis route of ratones · to þis reson thei assented.  
 Ac þo þe belle was yboust · and on þe beize hanged,  
 þere ne was ratoun in alle þe route · for alle þe rewme of Fraunce,  
 þat dorst haue ybounden þe belle · aboute þe cattis nekke,  
 Ne hangen it aboute þe cattes hals · al Engelande to wyne.'

The second use (= *nor*) survived the other: it occurs repeatedly in Spenser and other writers of the sixteenth century. In the following quotation we see by comparison with the Saxon that Wiclif retains this *ne* but not the other.

*St. Matthew vi. 20.*

'Gold-hordiaþ eow sōþlice gold- 'But tresoure see to þou tresouris  
 hordas on heofenan, Ðær nāðor oīm in heuene, wher neither rust ne  
 ne mōþþe hit ne fornimþ, and Ðær mouþthe distruyeth, and wher theues  
 þeofas hit ne delfað, ne ne forstelap.' deluen not out, ne stelen.'

507. In Chaucer we find the *ne* in both senses. The following examples are all from the *Prologue*.

*ne* = *not*.

- 'He neuere yit no vilonye ne saide.' (l. 70.)  
 'That no drop ne fell upon hir breste.' (l. 131.)  
 'So that the wolf ne made it not miscarie.' (l. 513.)

*ne* = *nor*.

- 'Ne wete hir fyngres in hir sauce depe.' (l. 129.)  
 'Ne that a monk whan he is recheles.' (l. 179.)

‘Ne was so worldly for to haue office.’ (l. 292.)

‘Ne of his speche dangerous ne digne.’ (l. 517.)

‘Ne maked him a spiced conscience.’ (l. 526.)

*ne* in both senses.

‘But he ne lefte nought for rayn ne thondre.’ (l. 492.)

When *ne* as a simple negative had been superseded by *not*, it still continued in the sense of *nor*, and thus we find it in Spenser:—

‘Then mounted he upon his Steede againe,  
And with the Lady backward sought to wend.  
That path he kept which beaten was most plaine,  
Ne ever would to any byway bend,  
But still did follow one unto the end,  
The which at last out of the wood them brought.  
So forward on his way (with God to frend)  
He passed forth, and new adventure sought:  
Long way he traveled before he heard of ought.’

*The Faery Queene*, i. i. 28.

508. Jacob Grimm would distinguish the former *ne* from the latter, writing the simple negative as *nē*, and the equivalent of ‘nor’ as *nē̄*. This he educes from comparison of the collateral forms, such as *nih* in Gothic for ‘nor.’ It is some confirmation of Grimm’s view, that the *ne* to which he gives the long vowel, outlived the other, and that it took so much longer time to become merged in newer forms. This is in itself an argument for the probability of its having been a weightier syllable.

509. Another form of this negative was the prefix *un-*, which has lived through the Saxon and English period without much change. It has always been a peculiarly expressive formula, and often strikingly poetical.

*ungrene.*

‘Folde wæs þa gyt  
Cræs ungrene, garsecg þeahte.’ Cædmon, 116.

*The field was yet-whites  
With grass not green; ocean covered all.*

Indeed, it is a very great factor in Anglo-Saxon. It stands in places where we have lost and might gladly recover its use, and where at present we have no better substitute than the unnatural device of prefixing a Latin *non*.

In the *Laws of Ine*, we have the distinction between land-owners and non-landowners expressed by *land ágende* and *unland ágende*.

In Chaucer and in the Ballads we meet with 'unset steven' for chance-meeting, meeting without appointment.

Gawin Douglas, in *The Palace of Honour*, written in 1501, ranks Dunbar among the illustrious poets, and adds that he is yet *undead*: 'Dunbar yit undeid.'

*unborrowed.*

'With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun.'—Gray.

*unchurch.*

'Our position . . . does not force us to "unchurch" (as it is termed) either of the other great sections of Christendom; as they do mutually one another and us.'—John Keble, *Life*, p. 425.

**510.** This *n*-particle is not limited to the Gothic family. It appears in Latin *ne*, *non*, and *in-* the negative prefix so well known in our borrowed Latin words, as *indelible*, *intolerable*, *invincible*, *inextinguishable*. In Greek it appears in the prefix *an-*, as in our borrowed Greek words, *anodyne*, which cancels pain; *anonymous*, which is unnamed.

There is something strange and fascinating about this faculty of negation in language. It has been often asserted that there is nothing in speech of which the idea is not borrowed from the outer world. But where in the outer world is there such a thing as a negative? Where is the natural phenomenon that would suggest to the human mind the idea of negation? There are, it is true, many appearances that may supply types of negation to those who are in search

of them. ' They who are in possession of the idea of negation may fancy they see it in nature, in such antitheses as light and shade, day and night, joy and sorrow. But they only see a reflection of their own thought. There is no negative in nature. All nature is one continued series of affirmatives; and if this term seem too rigid, it is only because the very term 'affirmation' is a relative one, and implies negation: in other words, the expression is improper only because of the lack of such a foil in nature as negation supplies in the world of mind. Negation is a product of mind. The first crude hint of it is seen in the mysterious analogies of instinct. A horse that has put his head into his manger and found nothing there but chaff, gives a toss and a snort that are strongly suggestive of negation. This is a case of expectation balked.

The negative in speech seems to be of this kind. Man is essentially a creature of special pursuits and limited aims. Everything in the world but that which he is at the time in search of is a Nay to him. Call it the smallness and narrowness of his sphere, or call it the divine, the creative, the purposeful, which out of the vast realm of nature carves for itself a route, a course, a direction—it is to this intentness of man that every obstacle, or even every neutral and indifferent thing, becomes contrasted with his momentary bent, and awakens the sense of a Negative in his mind.

511. The last great feature that rose in our path was the indefinite article. Nothing could be easier to understand how it came and what it was derived from; indeed, it seems the most obvious and natural thing in the world. One might almost imagine it to be unavoidable. And yet it is a rare possession, and a peculiar feature of modern languages. On the other hand, the negative is exceedingly mysterious in its nature and sources, and yet it seems to be

common to all human speech, and to be as familiar at the earliest stage of primitive barbarism, as in the most cultured languages of the civilised world. I have never heard of a language that had no negative. But I have heard of native dialects in Australia, in which the negatives have been selected as the features of distinction, and have set the names by which the races named themselves, and were known to others<sup>1</sup>. Just as the two main dialects of the Old French language were distinguished by their several affirmatives, and were called the *Langue d'oïl* and *Langue d'oc*.

512. Negation then being a sentient product, a subjective thing at its very root, we ask with curiosity out of what materials its formula was first made. Of this I have no opinion whatever to offer. But of the probable history of the *N*-formula I will boldly give my own notion, not so much from confidence in its certainty, as for the incidental illustration which will thus be called out. My conjecture is, that our *N*-particle is the relic of some such a word as *one*, or *an*, or *any*, three words which, as the student knows, are radically identical. I conceive that of the primitive formula of negation we know nothing, or only know that it has perished.

<sup>1</sup> 'The aboriginal tribes on the western slopes of the Australian Cordillera, from the south of Queensland to Victoria, speak a language quite distinct from that of the neighbouring tribes to the east and west, whose people rarely understand it.

'This language and these tribes, are called by themselves, and by the coast and inland natives, *Werrageries*, from their negative *Werri*. The other great family or chain of tribes to the west of them again, occupying the vast western lands of Australia, are designated (I have been told) in *their* turn by their peculiar negative.'

By the kind intervention of a friend, I have this very pertinent note from the pen of Mr. George Macleay, of Pendhill Court, many years resident in New South Wales.

The same friend also reminds me that the natives of the Pacific Islands universally designate Frenchmen as *We-Wees*.



Like the primitive oak, it has passed away; but it has left others instinct with its organism. Men are markedly emphatic in denial, and hence such formulas as *not one, not any, not at all, not a bit, not a scrap, not in the least*. See how *any* echoes back, and that with an emphasis, the antecedent negative:—

‘We come back to Sir Roundell Palmer’s suggestion, and repeat the inquiry whether a majority is *never* to be allowed *any* rights or privileges?’ March 26, 1870.

Hence too, in French, the *pas* and *point*, which back up the negation, also *rien* and *aucun* and *jamais*, and other indifferent words which by long contact with the negative, like steel from the company of the loadstone, have got so instinct with the selfsame force that they often figure as negatives sole. Thus, *pas encore, point du tout*; while the other three are so well known as negatives, that when they stand alone they are hardly ever anything else. Yet none of these words possess by right of extraction the slightest negative signification.

513. The fact seems to be that the word which is added for the sake of emphasis, becomes a more enduring element than its principal, and comes to bear the stress of the function, by the mere virtue of its emphasis. As in French we see but one or two extant relics of negation without the subjoined adverb, and as the subjoined adverb has in many instances grown into a recognised negative in its own right, so there is every reason to apprehend that but for the conservative influences of literature, the *ne* would have been by this time very much nearer to vanishing from the languages than it actually is. And, had this happened, it would have been only a repetition of that process in which I conceive *ne* to have formerly borne the converse part of the action. *Ne* is probably the relic of some adverbial pronoun, which at first

served a long apprenticeship under some still more ancient and now quite forgotten negative, of whose function it long bore the stress and emphasis, until at length it became the sole substitute.

514. The Welsh *dim*, which means 'no,' 'none,' is well known in the familiar answer *dim Saesoneg*, which means 'no Saxon,' or, 'I don't speak English.' Now this word *dim* is merely the word for *thing*. *Pob* means 'every,' and *pob ddim* is the Welsh for 'everything.' Thus, in modern Greek, the negative *dev* is the relic of *oûdév*, 'not one': the *not* has perished, and the *one* is now the negative.

As a further illustration it may be added that it is common for rustic arithmeticians to call the tenth cipher, the Zero or Nought, by the name of *Ought*, thus retaining only that part of the word which is purely affirmative by extraction.

*Nought* is an abbreviation for *nan-wuht*, 'no-whit'; and the verbal negative *not* is but a more rapid form of *nought*.

The answer *No!* is a short form of *none*, Saxon *nán*, and is plainly a Flat Adverb.

## 2. Of the Flexional Pronoun-Adverbs.

515. Under this head come such old familiar forms as *here*, *there*, *where*, *when*, *then*, *hence*, *whence*, *why*, *hither*, *whither*, which are ancient flexional forms that sprang from pronouns of the substantival and adjectival classes. The tracing of some of these to their origin is a matter of obscure antiquity: others are clear; but the enquiry belongs rather to Saxon than English philology.

If we search back into the growth of these, we shall find that they are old cases, genitive, dative, accusative, ablative. For instance, *why* is an old ablative; and so also is *the*, when we say 'so much the better,' like the Latin *eo*. This is

among the demonstratives what *why* is among the relatives, and its old form is *thi* or *thy*.

But these cases are now obscure, and the only inflection that is still active in this section is the genitive; as, *always*, *else* (A. S. *elles*), *hereabouts*, *inwards*, *once*, *othergates* Shakspeare, *Twelfth Night*, v. i, *outwards*, *since*, *thereabouts*, *towards*, *whereabouts*.

*anis* = once.

‘Consider it warily, read aftiner than anis,  
Well at ane blink sly poetry not tane is.’

Gawin Douglas.

*sonderlypes* = severally. .

‘Were he neuere of so hey parage,  
Wold he, ne wolde, þat scholde he do,  
Oþer þe deþ schold he go to.  
þus sonderlypes he dide þem swere,  
Tyl Argayl schulde þey. faip bere.’

R. Brunne's *Chronicle* (Lambeth MS.) 3876.

Early English Text Society.

516. Space will not permit us to unravel the history of each of these words, and we must pass lightly on to a group of composite pronoun-adverbs forming a link of transition between these adverbs and those of the third section:—*hereabout*, *hereabouts*, *hereafter*, *hereat*, *herebefore*, *hereby*, *herein*, *hereinbefore*, *hereinto*, *hereof*, *hereon*, *hereout*, *hereto*, *heretofore*, *hereunder*, *hereunto*, *hereupon*, *herewith*, *herewithal*; *thereabout*, *thereabouts*, *thereafter*, *thereafterward* (Coleridge's *Glossary*), *thereagainst* (Id.), *thereat*, *thereby*, *therefore*, *therefrom*, *therehence* (H. Coleridge), *therein*, *thereinto*, *thereof*, *thereon*, *thereout*, *thereover* (H. Coleridge), *therethrough* (Id.), *thereto*, *thereunto*, *thereupon*, *therewith*, *therewithal*, *therewithout* (H. Coleridge); *whereabout*, *whereabouts*, *whereas*, *whereat*, *whereby*, *wherever*, *wherefore*, *wherein*, *whereinto*, *whereof*, *whereon*, *whereso*, *wheresoever*, *wherethrough* (Wisdom xix. 8), *whereto*, *whereunto*, *whereupon*, *wherewith*, *wherewithal*.

These Composites might be presented in the form of a declension :—

|        |                        |
|--------|------------------------|
| Nom.   | that or it             |
| Gen.   | thereof                |
| Dat.   | thereto or therefor(e) |
| Acc.   | that or it             |
| Abl.   | therefrom              |
| Instr. | thereby.               |

These adverbs, so far as they are now used, are more highly symbolical than they once were. *Thereof* is used interchangeably with *of it* in 1 Kings vii. 27. In the following stave of the twelfth century we have *thereby* in the physical sense of *by that place* :—

‘ Merie sunge ðe muneches binnen Ely,  
 Ða Cnut ching rew ðerby :  
 Roweð cnites near ðe lant,  
 And here we ðes muneches sang.’

*Merry sang the monks in Ely,  
 As king Canute rowed thereby :  
 Row, ye boys, nigher the land,  
 And hear we these monks’ song.*

### 3. *Of the Phrasal Pronoun-Adverbs.*

517. As the flexional character becomes obscure, and the flexional signification is forgotten, symbolic words are called in to supplement the enfeebled adverb. Thus *whence* gets the larger formula *from whence*, as Genesis iii. 23 :

Miles Coverdale, 1535.

1611.

‘ The LORDE God put him out of the garden of Eden, to tyll y<sup>e</sup> earth, whence he was taken.’  
 ‘ Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, from whence he was taken.’

To this section belong all such adverbial phrases as these :  
*at all, at once, after all, of course, of a certainty, in a way, in a fashion, in a manner, in a sort of way, in some sort, after a sort.*

518. Some of these naturally develope with peculiar luxuriance after negative verbs and as a complement to the negation:—

‘Whereas in deede it toucheth not monkerie, nor maketh anything at all for any such matter.’—Hugh Latimer, *The Ploughers*, 1549.

*not at all.*

- ‘Not at all considering the power of God, but puffed vp with his ten thousand footmen, and his thousand horsemen, and his fourescore elephants.’—2 *Maccabees* xi. 4.

Some of the phrasal adverbs have assumed the form of single words, by that symphytism which naturally attaches these light elements to each other. Hence the forms *withal*, *however*, *whenever*, *howsoever*, *whensoever*, *whatever*, *nevertheless*, *notwithstanding*.

*contrariwise.*

‘Not rendring euill for euill, or railing for railing: but contrarywise blessing.’—1 *Peter* iii. 9.

*Upside-down* is an adverb that has been altered by a false light from *up-so-down*, or, as Wiclif has it, *up-se-down*, wherein *so* is the old relative, and the expression is equivalent to *up-what-down*.

‘He is traitour to God & turneþ þe chirche upsedown.’—John Wiclif, *Three Treatises*, ed. J. H. Todd, Dublin, 1851, p. 29.

‘Thus es this worlde torned up-so-downe.’

Hampole, MS. Bowes—after Halliwell, v. *Upsedown*.

*at leastwise.*

‘And every effect doth after a sort contain, at leastwise resemble, the cause from which it proceedeth.’—Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws*, &c. I. v. 2; also *id.* II. iv. 3.

*at no hand.*

‘And in what sort did these assemble? In the trust of ther own knowlege, or of their sharpenesse of wit, or deepenesse of iudgment, as it were in an arme of flesh? At no hand. They trusted in him that hath the key of Dauid, opening and no man shutting; they prayed to the Lord.’—*The Translators to the Reader*, 1611.

*which way; that way.*

‘Marke which way sits the Wether-cocke,  
And that way blows the wind.’

Ballad Society, vol. i. p. 344.

519. The progress of modern languages, turning as it does in great measure upon the development of the symbolic element, naturally sets towards the production of grouped expressions, and this displays itself with particular activity in the adverbial parts of language, whether they be presentively or symbolically adverbial, that is to say, whether the nounal or the pronounal character is prevalent. For the tendency of novelty is to show itself prominently in the adverbs of either category, just on the same principle as the extremities of a tree are the first to display the newest movements of growth. The adverbs are the tips or extremities of all that is material in speech.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE LINK-WORD GROUP.

520. I BORROW the title of this chapter from Mr. Thring's *Grammar*, though I somewhat vary the scope of the term 'Link-word' by comprising within it both prepositions and conjunctions. I know not of any happier term to comprise that vague and flitting host of words which, starting forth from time to time out of the formal ranks of the previous parts of speech to act as the intermediaries of words and sentences, are commonly called Prepositions and Conjunctions.

These two parts of speech have a certain fundamental identity, combined with a bold divergence in which they appear as perfectly distinct from one another. Their distinction is based on the definition that prepositions are used to attach nouns to the sentence, and conjunctions are used to attach sentences or introduce them.

The neutral ground on which they meet, and where no such discrimination is possible, is in the generic link-words *and, or, also, for, but, than*.

#### I. OF PREPOSITIONS.

521. The preposition may be defined as a word that expresses the relation of a noun to its governing word. A few examples must suffice for the illustration of a class of

words so familiarly known and so various in their shades of signification. The examples will be mostly of the less common uses, as we shall consider the common uses to be present to the mind of the reader; the object being to suggest the almost endless variety of shades of which prepositions are susceptible. First, the prepositions of the simpler and mostly elder sort.

*after.*

‘Full semyly aftir hir mete she raughte.’

*Prologue, 136.*

‘The vintners were made to pay licence duties after a much higher scale than that which had obtained under Ralegh.’—Edward Edwards, *Ralegh* (1868), ii. p. 23.

*by.*

‘But say by me as I by thee,  
I fancie none but thee alone.’

Ballad Society, vol. i. p. 244.

‘I think he will consider it a right thing by Mrs. Grant as well as by Fanny.’—Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ch. v.

Where we should now say ‘as regards Mrs. Grant,’ or ‘as far as Fanny is concerned.’

522. *By* having originally meant *about*, acquired in certain localities a power of indicating the knowledge of something bad about any person, insomuch that ‘I know nowt by him’ is provincially used for ‘I know no harm of him.’ And it is according to this idiom that in our version St. Paul witnesses of himself, ‘I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified’: and the expression occurs more than once in the curious book from which the following is quoted:—

‘Then I was committed to a darke dungeon fiteene dayes, which time they secretly made enquiry where I had lyen before, what my wordes and behaiour had beene while I was there, but they could find nothing by me.’—*Webbe his trauailes, 1590.*



*but.*

‘But (on this day) let sea-men feare no wracke.’

Shakspeare, *King John*, iii. 1. 92.

where the parentheses have the unusual signification of throwing the enclosed words into a composite lump to make a noun under the government of the preposition outside. It is equivalent to ‘except on-this-day.’

**But** still exists as a preposition in the connection

*nothing but—*

‘No two objects of interest could be more absolutely dissimilar in kind than the two neighbouring islands, Staffa and Iona :—Iona dear to Christendom for more than a thousand years;—Staffa known to the scientific and the curious only since the close of the last century. Nothing but an accident of geography could unite their names.’—The Duke of Argyll, *Iona*, init.

*for.*

‘Ye shal be slayne in all the coastes of Israel, I wil be avenged of you to lerne you for to knowe, that I am the LORDE.’—*Ezechiel*, xi. 10 (1535).

*like.*

‘Out of that great past he brought some of the sterner stuff of which the martyrs were made, and introduced it like iron into the blood of modern religious feeling.’—J. C. Shairp, *John Keble*, 1866.

**523.** **Of** is the most frequent preposition in the English language. Probably it occurs as often as all the other prepositions put together. It is a characteristic feature of the stage of the language which we call by distinction English, as opposed to Saxon. And this character, like so many characters really distinctive of the modern language, is French. Nine times out of ten that *of* is used in English it represents the French *de*. It is the French preposition in a Saxon mask. The word *of* is Saxon, if by ‘word’ we understand the two letters *o* and *f*, or the sound they make when pronounced together. But if we mean the function which

that little word discharges in the economy of the language, then the 'word' is French at least nine times out of ten.

Where the Saxon *of* was used, we should now mostly employ another preposition, as

‘Alys us of yfle.’  
*Deliver us from evil.*

The following from the *Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 894, shows one place where we should retain it, and one where we should change it:—

‘Ne côm se here ofter eall ute of  
þæm setum þonne tuwra. oþre siþe  
þa hie ærest to londe comon. ær  
sio fierd gesamnod wære. oþre siþe  
þa hie of þæm setum faran wol-  
don.’

‘The host came not all out of  
the encampment oftener than twice:  
once when they first to land came,  
ere the “fiere” was assembled: once  
when they would depart from the  
encampment.’

Thus the Saxon *of* has to be sought with some care by him who would find it in modern English. Those of the current type, such as are illustrated in the following quotation, are French:—

‘Thus it has come to pass that women have, by change to times of settled peace, and by the reformation of religion, lost something of dignity, of usefulness, and of resources.’—John Boyd-Kinnear, *Woman's Work*, p. 352.

Numerous as are the places in which this preposition now occurs, it is less rife than it was. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the language teemed with it. It recurred and recurred to satiety. This Frenchism is now much abated. I will add a few examples in which we should no longer use it.

‘Paul after his shipwreck is kindly entertained of the barbarians.’—*Acts* xxviii. (Contents.)

‘I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Iesus.’—*Phil.* iii. 12.

This *of* as the instrument of passivity has given place to *by*.

'How shall I feast him? What bestow of him.'

*Twelfth Night*, iii. 4. 2.

'What time the Shepheard, blowing of his nailes.'

*3 Henry VI*, ii. 5. 3.

'Doe me the favour to dilate at full,

What haue befallne of them and thee till now.'

*Comedy of Errors*, i. 1. 124.

In the Fourth Folio this last *of* is at length omitted.

**524. Off** is now little used prepositionally; it is mostly reserved for such adverbial uses, as *be off*, *take off*, *wash off*, *write off*, *they who are far off*, &c. But this is a modern distinction, and it exhibits one of the devices of language for increasing its *copia verborum*. Any mere variety of spelling may acquire distinct functions to the enrichment of speech.

In Miles Coverdale's Bible (1535) there is no distinction between *of* and *off*: as may be seen by the following from the thirteenth chapter of the prophet Zachary:—

'In that tyme shall the house off Dauid and the citesyns off Ierusalem haue an open well, to wash of synne and vncleennesse. And then (sayeth the LORDE off hoostes) I will destroye the names of Idols out off the londe.'

**On** and its compound **upon**.

'... and layde him on the Altar vpon the wood.'—*Genesis* xxii. 9.

*upon*.

'There were slaine of them, vpon a three thousand men.'—*1 Maccabees* iv. 15.

'And if any will judge this way more painfull, because that all things must be read upon the book, whereas before by the reason of so often repetition they could say many things by heart: if those men will weigh their labour, with the profit and knowledge which daily they shall obtain by reading upon the book, they will not refuse the pain, in consideration of the great profit that shall ensue thereof.'—*Old Common Prayer Book*, The Preface.

*over*.

'In a series of Acts passed over the veto of the President, Congress provided for the assemblage in each Southern State of a constituent Convention,

to be elected by universal suffrage, subject to the disfranchisement of all persons who had taken an active part in the civil or military services of the Confederacy.'

525. *Till* is from an ancient substantive *tīl*, still flourishing in German in its rightful form as *ziel*, and meaning goal, mark, aim, butt. Thus in some Saxon versified proverbs,

'Til sceal on eðle  
domes wyrcean.'

*Mark shall on patrimony  
doom-wards work.*

*Two Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, p. xxxv.

i.e. a borne or landmark shall be admissible as evidence. For its prepositional use, see the quotation from R. Brunne in 515.

This preposition is now appropriated to Time: we say *till then*, *till to-morrow*; but not *till there*, &c. Earlier it was used of Place, as in Shakspeare's *Passionate Pilgrim*:—

'She, poor bird, as all forlorn,  
Lean'd her breast up till a thorn,  
And there gan the dolefull'st ditty,  
That to hear it was great pity.'

This preposition enjoys a provincial function which is unknown in literature:

"Well, Hester, do you feel tired now that there are two sets of lodgers in the house?"

"Yes, Sir, till night I do." (Clevedon, Somersetshire.)

*to* (= comparable to).

'A sweet thing is love,  
It rules both heart and mind;  
There is no comfort in the world  
To women that are kind.'

Ballad Society, vol. i. p. 320.

The preposition *with* had a value in the fourteenth century which is unknown in Saxon and which did not permanently

root itself in English. It was used like the *by* of passivity, as—

‘Who saved Daniel in the horrible cave,  
Ther every wight, save he, master or knave,  
Was with the leon frette, or he asterte?’

*The Man of Lawes Tale*, 4895, ed. Tyrwhitt.

i.e. was devoured by the lion before he could stir. The isolation of this use at a particular point in our literature leads to the supposition that it may have been Danish, especially as this is the use of Danish *ved* to this day. It is the preposition used in title-pages before the author’s name, as:—‘Bjowulfs Drape. Et Gothisk Helte-Digt af Angel-Saxisk paa Danske Riim ved Nic. Fred. Sev. Grundtvig, Præst. Kjöbenhavn, 1820.<sup>1</sup>’

**526.** The prepositions are more elevated in the scale of symbolism than the pronouns. They are quite removed from all appearance of direct relation with the material and the sensible. They constitute a mental product of the most exquisite sort. They are more cognate to mind; they have caught more of that freedom which is the heritage of mind; they are more amenable to mental variations, and more ready to lend themselves to new turns of thought, than pronouns can possibly be. To see this it is necessary to stand outside the language; for these things have become so mingled with the very circulation of our blood, that we cannot easily put ourselves in a position to observe them. Those who have mastered, or in any effective manner even studied Greek, will recognise what is meant. To see it in our own speech requires more practised habits of observation. But here I can avail myself of testimony. Wordsworth had the art of bringing into play the subtle powers of English prepositions,

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<sup>1</sup> Beowulf’s Death. A Gothic Hero-Poem from Anglo-Saxon, in Danish Rime, by N. F. S. Grundtvig, Priest. Copenhagen, 1820.

and this feature of his poetry has not escaped the notice of Principal Shairp. 'Here, in passing, I may note the strange power there is in his simple prepositions. The star is *on* the mountain-top; the silence is *in* the starry sky; the sleep is *among* the hills; the gentleness of heaven is *on* the sea.' *Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, p. 74.

Wordsworth dedicated his *Memorials of a Tour in Italy* to his fellow-traveller, Henry Crabb Robinson. The opening lines are:—

'Companion! by whose buoyant spirit cheered,  
In whose experience trusting day by day.'

It was originally written '*To* whose experience.' Mr. Robinson suggested that '*In*' would be better than '*To*,' and the poet, after offering reasons for a thing which can hardly be argued upon, ended by yielding his own superior sense to the criticism of his friend. (*Diary*, 1837.)

**527.** A second series of prepositions are those in which flexion is traceable; for example, the genitival form, as *against*, *besides*, *sithence*; or comparison, as *near*, *next*.

*besides* (= without, or contrary to).

'Besides all men's expectation.'—Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws*, &c. Preface, ii. 6.

*sithence*.

'We require you to find out but one church upon the face of the whole earth, that hath been ordered by your discipline, or hath not been ordered by ours, that is to say, by episcopal regiment, sithence the time that the blessed Apostles were here conversant.'—Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws*, &c. Preface, iv. 1.

*near* (comparative of *nigh*).

'The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd,'

*Paradise Lost*, x. 562.

*next* (superlative).

'Happy the man whom this bright Court approves,  
His sov'reign favours, and his country loves,  
Happy next him, who to these shades retires.'

Alexander Pope, *Windsor Forest*, 235.

528. Perhaps we ought to range in this series such a preposition as *save*, which having come to us through the French *sauf*, from the Latin *salvo*, is still, at least to the perceptions of the scholar, redolent of the ablative absolute.

*save.*

'In one of the public areas of the town of Como stands a statue with no inscription on its pedestal, save that of a single name, VOLTA.'—John Tyn-dall, *Faraday as a Discoverer*.

Another instance of an old participle and a young preposition is *except*.

'... with all her unrivalled powers of mendacity, she very rarely succeeded in deceiving any one except her friends.'—John Hosack, *Mary Queen of Scots*, p. 35.

529. A third series of prepositions are the phrasal prepositions, consisting of more than one word. In the development of this sort of preposition, we have been expedited by French tuition. A constant and almost necessary element in their formation is the preposition *of*. They are the analogues of such French prepositions as *aupres de*, *autour de*, *au lieu de*; as

*in lieu of.*

'A burnt stick and a barn door served Wilkie in lieu of pencil and canvas.'—Samuel Smiles, *Self Help*, ch. iv.

*aboard of.*

'Every officer and man aboard of her entertained unbounded confidence in her qualities.'—Oct. 11, 1870.

*long of; along of.*

'All long of this vile Traitor Somerset.'

1 *Henry VI*, iv. 3. 33.

'Long all of Somerset, and his delay.' Ibid. 46.

A ruder form of this preposition was *long on* or *along on*, still heard in country places. Chaucer has

'I can not tell whereon it was along.

But wel I wot gret stryf is us among.'

*The Canoness Yemannes Tale*, 16398; ed. Tyrwhitt.

out of.

'... it cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Hierusalem.'—*Luke* xiii. 33.

in spite of; in spite of.

'As on a Mountaine top the Cedar shewes,  
That keepe his leaues in spight of any storme.'

2 *Henry VI*, v. 1. 206.

in despight of.

'And in despight of Pharao fell,  
He brought from thence his Israel.'

John Milton, *Psalm* cxxxvi.

Antecedent to this was the genitive formula 'in my despite,' *Titus Andronicus*, i. 2; 'in your despite,' *Cymbeline*, i. 7; 'in thy despite,' 1 *Henry VI*, iv. 7; 'in Love's despite,' John Keble, *Matrimony*.

for . . . sake (with genitive between).

'Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy.'—*Psalm* xii. 5 (elder version).

'But if any man say vnto you, This is offered in sacrifice vnto idoles, eate not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake.'—1 *Cor.* x. 28.

'For Sabine bright her only sake.'

Ballad Society, vol. i. p. 386.

530. This is the formula throughout the English Bible, and throughout Shakspeare with three exceptions, according to Mrs. Cowden Clarke. In the above examples, *troubles*, *his*, *conscience* are in the genitive case. The *s* genitive is not added to *conscience*, because it ends with a sibilant sound, and where there are two sibilants already, a third could hardly be articulated. The *s* of the genitive case is, however, often absent where this reason cannot be assigned. Thus:—

'For his oath sake.'—*Twelfth Night*, iii. 4.

'For fashion sake.'—*As You Like It*, iii. 2.

'For sport sake.'—1 *Henry IV*, ii. 1.



‘For their credit sake.’—*I Henry IV*, ii. 1.

‘For safety sake.’—*Id.* v. 1.

‘But for your health and your digestion sake.’

*Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 3.

Instead of this genitive the present use of the language substitutes an *of*-form, which occurs in Shakspeare three times:—

*for the sake of.*

‘And for the sake of them thou sorrowest for.’

*Comedy of Errors*, i. 1. 122.

‘If for the sake of Merit thou wilt hear mee.’

*Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 7. 54.

‘A little Daughter, for the sake of it

Be manly, and take comfort.’ *Pericles*, iii. 1. 21.

531. This class of prepositions is useful as letting us see how the older prepositions came into their place, and (to speak generally) how the symbolic element sustains itself and preserves itself from the natural decay of inanition. Here is a presentive word enclosed between two prepositions, as if it had been swallowed by them, and were gradually undergoing the process of assimilation. By and bye the substantive becomes obsolete elsewhere, and lives on here as a preposition, with a purely symbolic power.

Thus *in despite of* becomes first *despite of*—‘despite of all controversy,’ *Measure for Measure*, i. 2; ‘despite of death,’ *Richard II*, i. 1; and then in a further stage *despite* stands alone—‘despite his nice fence,’ *Much Ado*, v. 1; ‘despite thy victor sword,’ *Lear* v. 3; and in these latter cases the old substantive *despite* is as purely a preposition as the French *malgré*. And it may be added that *despite* as a substantive is as good as obsolete, except in poetry, but the prepositional use is well established.

## II. OF CONJUNCTIONS.

**532.** Of all the parts of speech the conjunction comes last in the order of nature. The office of the conjunction is to join sentences together, and therefore it presupposes the completion of the simple sentence; and as a consequence it would seem to imply the pre-existence of the other parts of speech, and to be the terminal product of them all. It is essentially a symbolic word, but this does not hinder it from comprising within its vocabulary a great deal of half-assimilated presentive matter. This is a point to which we shall return in the course of the section.

The necessity for conjunctions (other than *and, or, also*) does not arise until language has advanced to the formation of compound sentences. Hence the conjunctions are as a whole a comparatively modern formation. Almost all the conjunctions are recent enough for us to know of what they were made. And indeed they may conveniently be divided according to the parts of speech out of which they have been formed.

**533.** Of the derival of a conjunction from a preposition we have a ready instance in the old familiar *but*, at first a preposition, compounded of *by* and *out*; in Saxon *butan*, from *be* and *utan*.

Others of the same character are

*for.*

‘For thou, for thou didst view,  
That death of deaths, companion true.’

*till.*

‘The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it.’—Samuel Johnson, to Lord Chesterfield.

'As there are a thousand thoughts lying within a man that he does not know till he takes up the pen to write, so the heart is a secret even to him (or her) who has it in his own breast.'—W. M. Thackeray, *Esmond*, Bk. II, ch. i.

*until.*

'Shakspeare was quite out of fashion until Steele brought him back into the mode.'—W. M. Thackeray, *Esmond*, Bk. II. ch. x.

'No character is natural until it has been proved to be so.'—W. S. Macleay, quoted by Professor Rolleston, *Forms of Animal Life*, p. xxi.

**534.** Then there are conjunctions formed by the symphytism of a preposition with a noun, as in the Shakspearian *belike*, which is pure English, or *peradventure*, which is pure French, or *perhaps*, which is half French and half Danish.

In Chaucer, *Knight's Tale*, 2488, we find the full phrase out of which has been made the compressed form

*because.*

|                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>'But by the cause that they sholde ryse<br/>Eerly for to seen the grete fight<br/>Vn to hir reste wenten they at night.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Ellesmere MS.</p> | <p>'Bot be þe cause þat þei sholde rise<br/>Erly for to seen þe grete fighte<br/>Vnto her reste went þei att nighte.'</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Lansdowne MS.</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

In Caxton it appears as *by cause* :—

'Wherefore by cause thys sayd book is ful of holsom wysedom and requysyte vnto euery astate and degree, I haue purposed to enprynte it.'—*The Game of the Chesse*, A.D. 1474 (Preface).

This *because* has very largely divested itself of the old preposition, and is provincially used in the short form of *cause*. I happen to be able to give an authentic instance. In Ipplepen church there is an inscribed floor-stone, to the memory of two infants, who died in 1683 :—

'Mourn not for vs dear Relatiues Caus We  
 So earely left this Vale of Misery.  
 Blesst Infants soonest to their port arriue,  
 The aged longer with the stormes do striue.'

A conjunction formed from the reference of a preposition to a foregoing adverb, is—

*too . . . to.*

'I have seen too much of success in life to take off my hat and huzza to it as it passes in its gilt coach.'—W. M. Thackeray, *Esmond*, Bk. I. p. 30.

535. But the great source of conjunctions is the Pronoun. Here the ancient relative pronoun *so* is one of the most frequent factors, not only in its own form but likewise in *also*; and in *as*, which is shortened from an elder form of 'also,' namely *ealswa*, i.e. 'entirely, altogether so,' 'quite in that manner.'

In the following line of Chaucer, *Prologue* 92, we see the second *as* already mature, while the first is still in the course of formation. We see *al* and *so* in various stages of approximation until their final coalition in the form of *as*.

'He was al so fresche as is þe moneþ of Mai.'

Lansdowne MS.

'He was also fressh as ys þe moneth of May.'

Petworth MS.

'He was als freissch as is þe monþ of May.'

Corpus MS.

'He was as frosch as is the monyþ of May.'

Cambridge MS.

*as . . . as and as.*

'The only kind of faith which is inseparable from life is a divine conviction of truth imparted to the intellect through the heart, and which becomes as absolute to the internal conscience as one's existence, and as incapable of proof.'—Laurence Oliphant, *Piccadilly*, p. 275.

536. *So* and *as*, severally considered, are adverbial pronouns; and it is by their inherent capacity of standing to each other as antecedent and relative, that they together constitute a conjunction.

*so . . . as.*

‘With a depth so great as to make it a day’s march from the rear to the van, and a front so narrow as to consist of one gun and one horseman.’—A. W. Kinglake, *Invasion of the Crimea*, vol. iii. ch. ix.

*as . . . so and so.*

‘As great men flatter themselves, so they are flattered by others, and so robbed of the true judgment of themselves.’—R. Sibbes, *Soul’s Conflict*, ch. xiv.

The use of *as* for a conjunction-sole is now disallowed, and is in fact one of our standard vulgarisms. It is seen in the familiar saw, ‘Handsome is as handsome does.’ Yet this use occurs in the *Spectator*, No. 508—in the course of a correspondent’s letter it is true, but the correspondent is a young lady, and writes like one:—

‘Is it sufferable, that the Fop of whom I complain should say, as he would rather have such-a-one without a Groat, than me with the *Indies*?’

*so . . . that.*

‘Rich young men become so valuable a prize, that selection is renounced.’—John Boyd-Kinnear, *Woman’s Work*, p. 353.

*then = than.*

‘A wise man will make better use of an idle pamphlet, then a fool will do of sacred Scripture.’—John Milton, *Areopagitica*.

### 537. *Where*, equivalent to *whereas*.

‘Where in former times the only remedy for misgovernment real or supposed was a change of dynasty, the evil is now corrected at no greater cost than that of a ministerial crisis. Where in former times serious evils were endured because the remedy was worse than the disease, trivial inconveniences now excite universal complaints and meet with speedy remedy. Where formerly ministers clung to office with the tenacity of despair, and rival statesmen persecuted each other to the death, the defeated premier now retires with the reasonable prospect of securing by care and skill a triumphant return; and both he and his successors mutually entertain no other feelings than those to which an honourable rivalry may give rise. Where formerly every subsidy was the occasion of the bitterest contention, and was given at last grudgingly and with mistrust, the House of Commons has

never since the Revolution refused to the Crown the maintenance of a single soldier or reduced the salary of a single clerk.'—W. E. Hearn, *The Government of England*, 1867, p. 126.

**Whether.** The pronominal use of this interesting word is now antiquated, and it is used only as a conjunction:—

'Whether they wil heare, or whether they will forbear.'—*Ezekiel* ii. 5.

'Whether it were I or they.'—*1 Cor.* xv. 11.

**538.** To this same pronominal group belongs a conjunction, not so common as it once was, but one that has a fine old English ring with it, albeit a translation from the French. We mean the *how* before narratives, or the summary of a narrative, as in the heading of chapters. It comes from the age of chivalry; almost every chapter in Froissart begins with 'Comment.' It is still redolent of romance, and sometimes it has a sort of archness about it, preparing the reader for something strange, to surprise him by something droll:—

'Clearly there was no telling such an one  
How, when their monarch tried who loved him more  
Than he loved them, and found they loved, as he,  
Each man, himself, and held, no otherwise,  
That, of all evils in the world, the worst  
Was—being forced to die, whate'er death gain:  
How all this selfishness in him and them  
Caused certain sorrows which they sang about,—  
I think that Herakles, who held his life  
Out on his hand, for any man to take—  
I think his laugh had marred their threnody.'

Robert Browning, *Balaustion*, second ed. 1872, p. 66.

**539.** Of all the elements that go to make conjunctions, none come near the pronouns in importance. Often where other parts of speech get a footing in this office, it has been by pronominal ushering. Thus, in the case of *directly*, quoted below (541), it is clear that this word originally came

in as an adverb to a pronominal conjunction: it was at first 'directly as' or 'directly that.'

Of the conjunctions which are of pronominal extraction the *so* and the *as* are our Saxon inheritance, whereas the conjunctival use of *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *which*, *what*, *whence*, are French imitations. In the Latin language, and in those which spring from it, the relative pronoun is the chief conjunction. In French, for example, *qui* and *que* play a part which their equivalents in English do not come near. Indeed, the degree in which these relatives act as conjunctions is almost the touchstone of a romanised style. In Latin we everywhere see such sentence-links as the following: *qui*, *quæ*, *quod*, *quæ quum ita sint*, *quo facto*, *quibus peractis*, *quod si*, *quare*, *quum*.

For a French instance, I quote the following example from Père Lacordaire, with the anonymous translation:—

'Vous ne fonderiez donc pas une doctrine, eussiez-vous devant vous mille ans multipliés par mille ans. Que si vous sortez des principes de l'incrédulité, à l'instant même vous retombez en Jésus-Christ, le seul maître possible de quiconque reconnaît une autorité.'—*Quarantième Conférence*.

'You would not then found a doctrine, even if you had a thousand years multiplied by another thousand before you. If you quit the principles of unbelief, at that very moment you fall back upon Jesus Christ, the only possible master for whosoever acknowledges an authority.'

Although this translation is almost in the extreme of verbal fidelity, yet the *Que* is passed over in silence. And rightly so.

540. We turned *who* and *which* from interrogatives into relatives under French influence, as already shewn (472), and then it followed that these words took a place also as conjunctions, just as the French *qui* and *que* do. Moreover, we accepted also the symbol-cases of these words as conjunctions, namely, *of whom*, *to whom*, *in which*, and we said, 'There is the man to whom I sent you,' 'This is the

thing of which I spoke'; instead of 'The man I sent you to,' 'The thing I spoke of.' This Romanesque form of speech was well established among us in the seventeenth century, and it still retains its place, though there has been a reaction, which Addison has the credit of.

It often happens that when foreign idioms are admitted into a language, they make awkward combinations with the native material, especially in unskilled hands. So this relative conjunction is always getting into trouble. It is alleged that even the correspondents of first-class newspapers will write *and who*, *and which*, *and where*, inappropriately. Of course there is a position in which such an expression is unimpeachable. If two clauses, each of them beginning with *which*, have to be combined by *and*, the second clause will naturally begin with *and which*. But this will not justify examples like the following :—

'In the afternoon the Flower Show will be held in the gardens of Worcester College, *and at which* the band of the Coldstreams will assist; . . . At night Miss Neilson the well-known actress, *and who* has obtained in a very short time a considerable reputation as a reader, will give a dramatic reading from the Ingoldsby Legends, Tennyson, &c., in the Claremont-rooms, *and where* one may expect a crowded audience.'

#### 541. Conjunctions from nounal adverbs :—

*er, or, ere* (Saxon *ær*).

'Forsaketh sinne or sinne you forsake.'

. *Canterbury Tales*, 12,220.

'There are two kinds of biographies, and of each kind we have seen examples in our own time. One is as a golden chalice, held up by some wise hand, to gather the earthly memory ere it is spilt on the ground. The other is as a millstone, hung by partial yet ill-judging friend, round the hero's neck to plunge him as deep as possible in oblivion.'—J. C. Shairp, *John Keble*, p. 69.

Sometimes two forms of the same word were combined, as



*or ere.*

‘Two long dayes journey (Lords) or ere we meete.’

Shakspeare, *King John*, iv. 3. 20.

At length this strengthening word was supposed to be *ever* :—

‘And the Lyons had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or euer they came at the bottome of the den.’—*Daniel* vi. 24.

*nevertheless.*

‘I cannot fully answer this or that objection, nevertheless I will persevere in believing.’—J. Llewellyn Davies, *The Gospel and Modern Life*, p. xiv.

*directly.*

‘On the contrary, is it not the case that everybody and every section are telling us continually that the religious difficulty, directly you come to practice, becomes insignificant, and that it is a difficulty made rather for Parliament and for debate than one which would be raised within the schools?’—House of Commons, June 25, 1870.

**542.** Conjunctions from noun adjectives :—

*least, modern lest.*

‘Lastly, followers are not to be liked, least while a man maketh his traine longer, he maketh his winges shorter.’—*Bacon’s Essays*, ed. W. Aldis Wright, p. 275.

*no more than.*

This is now little more than an illustrative way of saying *not at all*. But it once had its literal and quantitative signification :—

‘So hote he loved that by nightertale  
He slep no more then doth the nightingale.’

Chaucer’s *Prologue*, 98.

The idea here is not that he watched all night, but that he was a short sleeper.

543. Conjunctions formed from substantives. Of these, one has been noticed above (535). Another is *case*, as in the following :—

‘The world’s a hive,  
From whence thou canst derive  
No good, but what thy soul’s vexation brings :  
But *case* thou meet’  
Some petty petty sweet,  
Each drop is guarded with a thousand stings.’

Quarles’s *Emblems*, Bk. I. No. 3.

And *while*, the old substantive for ‘time.’

‘But, while his province is the reasoning part,  
Has still a veil of midnight on his heart.’

William Cowper.

Substantives embodied between pronominal factors, as—

*what time as.*

‘Thou calledst upon me in troubles, and I delivered thee: and heard thee what time as the storm fell upon thee.’—*Psalms* lxxxi. 7, elder version.

*Sith* is an old substantive for ‘journey,’ ‘road,’ ‘turn’: it is used as a conjunction in *Ezekiel* xxxv. 6, and not again in the text of our Bible :—

‘Being iustified by faith, wee haue peace with God, and ioy in our hope, that sith we were reconciled by his blood, when wee were enemies, wee shall much more be saued being reconciled.’—*Romans* v. Contents.

It occurs five times in the First Book of Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, as appears by the Glossary to Mr. Church’s<sup>1</sup> edition.

544. Conjunctions formed from verbs, or containing verbs in their composition. The first place here is claimed

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<sup>1</sup> Dean of St. Paul’s.

by the old familiar *if*, Saxon *gif*, imperative of the verb *gifan*, to give<sup>1</sup>.

‘Ac gif ic hæfde swilcne anweald, swilce se ælmihtega God hæfð; ðonne ne lete ic no ða yfelan derian ðam godum swa swiþe swa hi nu doþ.’—King Alfred’s *Boetliu*s, ed. Cardale, p. 304.

*But if I had such power as the Almighty God hath; then would not I let the evil hurt the good so much as they now do.*

So also *yet*, Saxon *get*, *gyl*, is reasonably identified with the verb to get.

‘You may paint with a very big brush, and yet not be a great painter.’—Thomas Carlyle, *Frederick the Great*, Bk. I. ch. i.

Horne Tooke says that *an* in such expressions as ‘An it please your honour,’ is the imperative of the Saxon verb *unnan*, to grant. For my own part I would as lief think it merely a special habit of the common *and*, and we know it was often written *sō*.

‘And my will is that xii pore men and they may be gete have xii gownes,’ &c.—*The Will of Dame Jane Lady Barre*, 1484, in *A Memoir of the Manor of Bitton*, by the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, formerly Vicar of Bitton.

### *howbeit, notwithstanding.*

‘Howbeit (as evermore the simpler sort are, even when they see no apparent cause, jealous notwithstanding over the secret intents and purposes of wiser men) this proposition of his did somewhat trouble them.’—Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws*, &c., Preface, ch. ii.

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<sup>1</sup> Here is no denial of the lineal relationship of our *if* with Mæso-Gothic *ibai*, *yabai*; only the assertion of a more recent derivative attachment. Those who will not allow any word more than one derivation, must confine our *if* to the line of *ibai*, *yabai*. The chief masters in microscopic etymology tell us that at the root of these again there is a Sanskrit relative pronoun *ya*, traceable through conjunctions found in Lithuanian and Lettish and Finnish and Lappish, and that to this *ya* has been added a second part *ba*, probably of the Sanskrit root *bbū*, i. e. English *be*. According to the best authorities in this kind of research our *if* is a compound, in which two distinct roots are now represented by two letters forming a monosyllable. All this may really be true, and yet Saxon *gif* may have been assigned in Saxon minds to *gifan*, and may have gained a new vitality by having thus rooted itself in a new soil.

545. Here we must notice the conjunctive use of the participle *being*, common enough in the seventeenth century, but now obsolete. It is notoriously frequent in Pearson *On the Creed*, as:—

‘Now being the Creed comprehendeth the principles of our religion,’—

‘For, being every natural cause actually applied doth necessarily produce its own natural effect,’—

‘—and being we have placed the formality of the object of all belief in credibility,’—

‘Being then I have described the true nature and notion of Belief,’—

*Preface, and Article I.*

*seeing.*

‘And one morn it chanced  
He found her in among the garden yews,  
And said, “Delay no longer, speak your wish,  
Seeing I must go to-day.”’ *Idylls of the King.*

*according.*

‘Their abominations were according as they loved.’—*Hosea ix. 10.*

*talk of.*

‘Talk of the privileges of the Peerage, of Members’ exemption from the Eighth Commandment, of the separate jurisdiction secured on the Continent to soldiers,—what are they all put together to a privilege like this?’

*depend upon it.*

‘Depend upon it, a good deal is lost by not looking round the corner.’—*Mrs. Prosser, Quality Fogg’s Lost Ledger.*

When a sentence is opened with *No doubt*, this seems to claim a place among these verbal conjunctions, being a condensed expression for ‘There is no doubt that.’ It has, however, a less emphatic burden than would be conveyed by the latter formula:—

‘No doubt a determined effort would be made by many of those who are now engaged in these occupations, to prevent the admission of females to them, and to keep up the monopoly of sex.’—*Frederic Hill, Crime: its Amount, Causes, and Remedies, 1853; p. 86.*

546. Here it may be objected—Do you call these words symbolic? What does ‘presentive’ mean, if such words as *see, talk, depend, doubt*, are not presentive? In what sense can these belong to a group which is called essentially symbolic?

This very contradiction troubled the author of *Hermes*, a famous book on universal grammar, which was published in 1751. He had pitched upon the distinction of presentive and symbolic as the fundamental and essential distinction of his universal grammar. He did not, indeed, use the terms; but he spoke of ‘words as (1) significant by themselves, or significant absolutely, and (2) significant by association, or significant relatively. When he treats of conjunctions, he regards them as belonging to the second class, and yet he cannot shut his eyes to certain refractory instances. The embarrassment of James Harris on this occasion became the sport of Horne Tooke, who published his *Diversions of Purley* in 1786. In his saucy manner he sums up the doctrine of the *Hermes* as follows:—

‘Thus is the *conjunction* explained by Mr. Harris:

A sound significant devoid of signification,  
Having at the same time a kind of *obscure* signification;  
And yet having neither signification nor no signification,  
Shewing the attributes both of signification and no signification;  
And linking signification and no signification together.’

*Diversions of Purley*, Part I. ch. vii.

This is a caricature, and we only avail ourselves of its exaggerated features, in order to raise up before us in bolder relief the difficulty which we are here confronting.

547. The solution seems to be this:—That the essential nature of a conjunction (or of any other organic member of speech) discovers itself, not in the recent examples of the class, but in those which have by long use been purged of accidental elements. This will be clearer by an illustration drawn from familiar experience.

It is well known that many words in common use are masked, that they do not express plainly the sense which they are notwithstanding intended to convey. We do not always call a spade a spade. We have recourse in certain well-known cases to forms of expression as distant from the thing meant as is in any way consistent with the intention of being understood. In such cases it will have struck every philological observer that it becomes necessary from time to time to replace these makeshifts with others of new device. In fact, words used to convey a veiled meaning are found to wear out very rapidly. The real thought pierces through; they soon stand declared for what they are, and not for what they half feign to be. Words gradually drop the non-essential, and display the pure essence of their nature. And the real nature of a word is to be found in the thought which is at the bottom of its motive. As then we know full well how this nature pierces through all disguise, casts off all drapery and pretext and colour, and in the course of time stands forth as the name of that thing which was to be ignored even while it was indicated,—even so it is in the case now before us.

548. There are reasons why the speaker is not satisfied with the old conjunctions, and he brings forward words with more body and colour to reinforce the old conjunctions or to stand as conjunctions alone. If these words continue for any length of time to be used as conjunctions, the presentive matter which now lends them colour will evaporate, and they will become purely symbolic. Of this we may be sure from the experience of the elder examples. Even in such a conjunction as *because*, where the presentive matter is still very plain, it has, generally speaking, no existence to the mind of the speaker.

It is not indeed a singular quality in the conjunction, that

being itself essentially symbolic, it should receive accessions from the presentive groups. This is seen also in the pronoun and in the preposition, and it is only as a matter of degree that the conjunction is remarkable in this respect. As far as observation reaches, the symbolic element is everywhere sustained by new accessions from the presentive, and it is worthy of note that the extreme symbolic word, the conjunction, which is chiefly supplied from groups of words previously symbolic, seems to be the one which most eagerly welcomes presentive material, as if desirous to recruit itself after its too great attenuation through successive stages of symbolic refinement.

549. The employment of conjunctions has greatly diminished from what it, once was, as the reader may readily ascertain if he will only look into the prose of three centuries back. The writings of Hooker, for example, bristle with conjunctions<sup>1</sup>, many of which we have now learned to dispense with. The conjunction being a comparatively late development, and being moreover a thing of literature to a greater extent than any other part of speech, was petted by writers and scholars into a fantastic luxuriance. It connected itself intimately with that technical logic which was the favourite study of the middle ages. Logic formed the base of the higher region of learning, and was the acquirement that popularly stamped a man as one of the learned, and hence it came that men prided themselves on their *wherefores* and *therefores*, and all the rest of that apparatus which lent to their discourse the prestige of a formulated piece of ratiocination.

But this is now much abated, and the connection of sentences is to a large extent left to the intelligence of the

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<sup>1</sup> As above, 544: 'howbeit . . . even when . . . notwithstanding.'

reader. Two or three very undemonstrative conjunctions, such as *if*, *but*, *for*, *that*, will suffice for all the conjunctive appliances of page after page in a well-reasoned book. Often the word *and* is enough, where more than mere concatenation is intended, and this colourless link-word seems invested with a meaning which recalls to mind what the *and* of the Hebrew is able to do in the subtle department of the conjunction. Indeed, we may say that we are coming back in regard to our conjunctions to a simplicity such as that from which the Hebrew language never departed. The Book of Proverbs abounds in examples of the versatility of the Hebrew *and*. Our *but*, as a conjunction, covers the ground of two German conjunctions, *sondern* and *aber*. If we look at Proverbs x. there is a *but* in the middle of nearly every verse, equivalent to *sondern*. These are all expressed in Hebrew by *and*. If we look at i. 25, 33; ii. 22; iv. 18, we see *but* in the weightier sense of *aber*, and here again the same simple *and* in the Hebrew.

550. In the close of the following quotation, the *and* is equivalent to 'and yet' or 'and at the same time.'

'In Mecklenburg, Pommern, Pommerellen, are still to be seen physiognomies of a Wendish or Vandalic type (more of cheek than there ought to be, and less of brow; otherwise good enough physiognomies of their kind); but the general mass, tempered with such admixtures, is of the Platt-Deutsch, Saxon, or even English character we are familiar with here at home. A patient stout people; meaning considerable things, and very incapable of speaking what it means.'—Thomas Carlyle, *Frederick the Great*, Bk. II. ch. iv.

In conversation we omit the relative conjunction very usually; and poetry often does the same with great gain of ease and simplicity:

'For I am he am born to tame you, Kate.'

*Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1.

'Where is it mothers learn their love?' John Keble.



551. When the bulkier conjunctions are used in the present day, or when ordinary conjunctions are accumulated, an effect is produced as of documentary solemnity. Thus *Now therefore* (*Acts* xxiii. 15), *Now whereas* (Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws*, v. 76. 5), *notwithstanding however*, &c.

This closes the analysis of the Parts of Speech, and prepares the way for the structural analysis. Hitherto the elements of speech have been classified; it remains to treat of their grouping. The task falls into the same two parts, whenever an elaborate plan has to be analysed with a view to production or reproduction. I witnessed the arrival of a pavement at the spot where it was to be laid down, and as it was unloaded I saw that it was packed in sorts and sizes, like with like. But as the work proceeded, the men took a piece from this lot and a piece from that lot, and shewed them out on the ground near their work, so as to compose partial groups in the order of the design. To some such a grouped analysis do we now proceed.

## CHAPTER X.

### OF SYNTAX.

**552.** SYNTAX is a Greek word, signifying the order or array of words in a sentence. But the term signifies something beyond its etymological contents. It signifies that nexus between words which constitutes them Sense; a web of delicate functional relations, apprehended not by the eye but by the mind.

Syntax will accordingly mean the presentation of the sentence in its constituent parts, and the enquiry by what contrivances these parts are made to produce a continuous and consistent signification. We shall find that there are three kinds of instrumentality which are the most active in the production of this effect.

**553.** The first of these is collocation, or the relative position of words. So far as this agency is exerted, the parts of a sentence tell their function by the mere order of their arrangement. This sort of syntax we call Flat.

The second is where the functions of the members of the sentence are shewn by modifications in the forms of words. This is the Flexional Syntax.

The third is where the same relations are expressed by symbolic words. This is the Phrasal Syntax.

The analytical action of syntax resolves the sentence not into words, but into parts of speech. The knowledge of words as parts of speech is the sum total of the doctrine of syntax. And for this reason many of the details which are ordinarily comprised under the head of syntax have already been disposed of in the foregoing chapters on the Parts of Speech. Accordingly, we have in the present chapter only to attend to the salient points, and such as are of the most essential value in the mechanism of the sentence; and these are comprised in the above division, which will therefore constitute the plan of this Chapter.

#### I. OF FLAT OR COLLOCATIVE SYNTAX.

554. How important an element mere position is in the structure of the English sentence, may readily be seen by the contrast which appears if we consider how unimportant, or at least secondary, the same element is in Latin. If we have to say that men seek victual, the words by which this would be expressed in Latin are so unaffected by the order of their arrangement that it is impossible to dislocate the sentence. It is good in any order:—

Homines quaerunt victum.

Quaerunt victum homines.

Victum homines quaerunt.

Homines victum quaerunt.

Quaerunt homines victum.

Victum quaerunt homines.

All these variations are possible, because each word has its inflection, and that inflection determines the relative office of each word and its contribution towards the meaning of the

whole. But in English the sense depends upon the arrangement, and therefore the order of the English sentence cannot be much altered without detriment to the sense :—

Men seek victual.  
 Cats like fish.  
 Boys love play.  
 Fools hate knowledge.  
 Horses draw carts.  
 Diamonds flash light.

All these examples present us with one, and that the simplest, scheme of a sentence : and in them we see that the sense requires the arrangement of the words in the given order of collocation.

555. Each of these three words is capable of amplification. In the first place the subject may be amplified by an adjective ; thus,—

Hungry men seek victual.  
 Wise men desire truth.  
 Healthy boys love play.

This adjective has its proper collocation. We have no choice whether we will say *hungry men* or *men hungry*. The latter is inadmissible, unless it were for some special exigency, such as might rise in poetry ; and then the collocation would so far affect the impression communicated, that after all it could not be called a mere alternative, whether we should say *hungry men* or *men hungry*.

The next thing is the placing of the article. The article stands immediately before the adjective :—

The hungry man seeks victual.  
 The healthy boy loves play.  
 A wise man desires truth.

This amplification brings out to view an important consequence of the order last observed. As we put our adjective before our substantive, it results that when the article is put before both, it is severed from the substantive to which it primarily appertains.

The French, who can put the adjective either before or after its noun, have by this means the opportunity of keeping the article and noun together in most cases where it is desirable. This is a trifle, so long as it is confined to the difference between *the wise man, a good man, and l'homme sage, un homme bon*. But then the adjective being capable of amplification in its turn, the gap between the article and its noun may be considerably widened. An adverb may be put to the adjective, and then it becomes *the truly wise man, a really good man*. Or, as in the following:—

'The inadequacy of our means to meet the spiritual wants of the annually increasing population of this colony.'—*Letter of the Bishop of Adelaide, 1859.*

**556.** The severance between the article and its noun had not extended beyond such examples as these<sup>1</sup>, until within the recent period which may be designated as the German era. Our increased acquaintance with German literature has caused an enlargement in this member of our syntax. We not unfrequently find a second adverb, or an adverbial phrase, or a negative, included in the interval between the article or pronoun and the noun; thus,—

'In that not more populous than popular thoroughfare.'—Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*, ch. xii.

'And is it indeed true that they are so plied with the gun and the net and the lime that the utter extinction of their species in these islands may be looked upon as a by no means remote eventuality?' •

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<sup>1</sup> In Spanish this structure was already ridiculed as strange and romantic by Cervantes (1549-1617):—'el jamas como se debe alabado caballero D. Quijote'—'The never-enough-to-be-praised Don Quixote.'—Ch. i.; translation by Charles Jarvis.

'There he puts down the varied and important matter he is about to say, according to a large plan and tolerably strictly carried out arrangement.'—*Translation from German.*

This is now sometimes used by highly qualified English writers.

'I have now travelled through nearly every Department in France, and I do not remember ever meeting with a dirty bed : this, I fear, cannot be said of our happily in all other respects cleaner island.'—Mr. Weld, *Vacation in Brittany*, 1866.

'Douglas, in the *Nenia*, p. 10, is so far as I know the first who called attention to this passage of our great poet [*Hamlet* v. 1], as illustrating the very commonly to be observed presence of "shards, flints, and pebbles," in graves, into which it is difficult to think they could have got by accident.'—George Rolleston, M.D. *On Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon Sepulture*.

**557.** This expansibility of the noun applies equally to the subject and to the object; that is to say, it may take place either before or after the verb, or even both. It does not often happen that the two wings of the sentence are expanded in the same manner, because the uniformity would not be pleasing. But the same order rules on the one side as on the other; and variety is sought only to avoid monotony. If we were speaking of the sense of liberty which is nourished in a people by the habit of discussing and correcting the laws which bind them, we might say,—

Deliberation implies consent.

Continuous deliberation implies continuous consent.

A continuous deliberation implies a continuous consent.

A continuous deliberation on the law implies a continuous consent to the law.

A continuous deliberation on the law by the subject, implies a continuous assent to the law on the part of the subject.

A continuous deliberation on the law by the subject through the medium of representation, implies a continuous assent to the law on the part of the subject in his own proper person.

A practically continuous deliberation . . . implies an absolutely continuous assent, &c.

When the accumulation between the article (or pronoun) and the substantive becomes overcharged, the sentence recovers its equilibrium by turning the qualifying phrase over to the other side. Instead of 'a practically continuous deliberation' we may say 'a deliberation which is practically continuous'; and if we alter 'a tolerably strictly carried out arrangement' to 'an arrangement which is tolerably strictly carried out' we relieve the phrase of some part of its turgidity.

558. And indeed we seem to trace a recurrent inversion in the ordering of words in the Sentence.

The movement is so gradual, that to the national apprehension, and for all purposes of grammar, the collocative habit is fixed. It is only if we look across great tracts of time that we perceive the inversion. If we translate the Latin verb *ibo* in the order of its elementary parts, it is, *go will I*: but now all the great western languages say it in this order, *I will go*.

The general habit of the old Indo-European languages was to place the symbolic words after their presentives, and it was out of this habit that terminal flexion grew so widely prevalent. The modern languages put the pronouns and prepositions before their verbs and nouns, and thus act as a counterpoise to the ancient terminations.

The Mæso-Gothic remains are not generally available as independent evidence of ancient collocation, because they so largely obey the order of the Greek original. For this reason I do not quote *runa nēmun* (94) and many such, which else would be to the point. But there is at least one case of independent Gothic structure. When a single Greek word is resolved in translation into two or three words, we then

see the native order of arrangement so far as these two or three words are concerned, because it cannot be guided by the Greek. In Matt. xi. 5, καθαρίζονται is rendered 'hrainyai wairthand,' i.e. 'clean become': and in verse 19, ἐδικαιώθη is thus given—'uswaurhta gadomida warth,' i.e. 'righteous judged is.' These are the exact reverse of the modern order, 'become clean,' and 'is judged righteous.'

559. A like conclusion may be drawn from Particle-composition. We find particles which once were prefixes now used as separable suffixes; thus Gower, in the Fifth Book of the *Confessio Amantis*, says that the king ordered a table to be set up and spread before his bed, only instead of 'set up,' as we should now speak, he has it 'upset':

'Ther scholde be to-fore his bed,  
A bord upset and faire spred:—

In Acts xxvii. 16, 'We had much work to come by the boat,' the verb to *come by* means to compass or get possession of; and it is only an inverse reconstruction of the old verb to *become* (= *by come*), if we remember its first sense of come about and so arrive at.

The adverb *by* is identical in origin with the prefix *be-*, and both at first meant *about*, *around*. But this signification being lost sight of, we find that *round* comes naturally in as its reinforcer, and is ranged on the other side of the principal as a counter-satellite to the particle *be*:—

'Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villanies.'

" William Shakspeare, *Hamlet*, v. 2. 29.

560. One of the most telling examples is the English Negative. Its place is now after the verb, as *I was not*, *I will not*. In early times it was before the verb, as the coalesced forms *nas* and *nill* sufficiently prove.

And this case of the Negative is only a particular instance



of a rule which applies on a large scale to the station of adverbs in attendance on verbs. In the whole tribe of verbal prefixes we see the relics of a time when the adverb stood before the verb. In the living English language the adverb has taken the opposite stand. We retain comparatively few of the elder sort from our old mother tongue, such as

| LEFT.   | RIGHT.   |
|---------|----------|
| alight  | get off  |
| upheave | heave up |

but we have borrowed them abundantly from Latin and French; and we may array the foreign borrowings against the genuine English.

|         |               |
|---------|---------------|
| ascend  | go up         |
| depart  | go away       |
| descend | come down     |
| pervade | pass through. |

**561.** The three languages are variously affected towards this movement. The French have the Left structure altogether, and this is the chief source of that curiously bookish savour which French conversation has upon an English palate that has for a long time been deprived of the pleasure of it. The Germans use both Left and Right according to some obscure and rigidly grammatical rules, which bring more trouble to the learner than profit to the diction. The English retain both with the happiest effect as to copiousness and the increased power of suiting speech to time, place, person, and occasion; to be homely or dignified, playful or stately, as may happen to be required.

Perhaps enough has been said to indicate traces of a law which the student may further exemplify for himself<sup>1</sup>. Of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Japanese language offers an admirable illustration. The native grammarians distinguish their nouns, verbs, adjectives, numerals and pronouns very carefully from their particles, which they call *Teniwoba*. This

operative cause of this alternation, we shall have something to say in the last chapter. For the present we will only add that this double movement seems to deserve a name, such as Heteroblastēsis or Yon-strif<sup>1</sup>.

562. The movement is slow, and each age enjoys its own habits of collocation, with all the security of an immutable thing. Without this condition, an inversion of order could not be the great resource that it now is for conveying variety of signification. If the order of pronoun and verb in 'you are' were not firm, the mere change of order to 'are you' would not convey all the transition from assertion to interrogation. On this single variation there hinges in our family a series of syntactic consequences. Close to interrogation is contingency and hypothesis; and consequently we make a Conditional Mood by this mere inversion of order. Thus 'Were the whole realm of nature mine,' is equivalent to 'if it were mine.' More rarely in prose, as: 'And what will you do should you find them out?'—Mrs. Trimmer, *The History of the Robins*, ch. iv. In English prose we commonly use conjunctions for this purpose, and we keep the inversion for poetry: that is to say, our prose is after the French 'Si tout le monde était à moi,' while our poetry retains the Gothic

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grammatical term is composed of four of the commonest of those particles, namely, *te*, *ni*, *wo*, and *ba*. Under this class come the article and the preposition, besides verbal and adjectival terminations. It is a standing rule of syntax, in this as in all the languages of the Altaic family, that every defining word precedes the word defined. 'Thus the adjective precedes the noun, the adverb the verb, the genitive the word which governs it, the objective case the verb, and the word governed by a preposition the preposition.' On the other hand, the *Tenivoba* which are the signs of Mood and Tense, and sometimes of Person, Number and Case, are suffixed to the words they modify; presenting us with a dual system of Collocation analogous to the instances cited above.—*A Grammar of the Japanese Written Language; with a Short Cbrestomathy*. By G. W. Aston, M.A.

<sup>1</sup> In the west country the liveliest expression for growth, whether of man or beast or plant, is the verb to *strive*, which in this use provokes comparison with the German *treiben*.

faculty of collocative structure. In German and Danish this inversion is one of the commonest means of expressing modality even in prose, as in the following from Ludvig Holberg:—

‘Men vil du giøre, hvad jeg beder dig, skal du nyde gode Dage.’—*Den pantsatte Bondedreng*, Act i. Scene 3.

‘But if thou wilt do, what I bid thee, thou shalt taste good days.’—*The Prentice Pawned*, i. 3.

563. So well established is the general order of collocation, that marked divergences arrest the attention, and have, by reason of their exceptional character, a force which may be converted into a useful rhetorical effect; thus—

*beauties the most opposite.*

‘Having been successively subject to all these influences, our language has become as it were a sort of centre to which beauties the most opposite converge.’—H. T. W. Wood, *The Reciprocal Influence of French and English Literature in the Eighteenth Century*, 1870.

It occasionally happens that the surprise of an unusual order becomes the evidence to our minds that there is such a thing as a usual order of collocation. In the following sentence the putting of the comparative clause before the verb is an illustration of this:—

‘And this it is that I think I have seen, and that I wish, if I can be so happy, to shew to those who need it more than myself, and who better than myself may profit by it.’—*The Mystery of Pain*.

When in the *Idylls* we read of the ‘Table Round,’ we experience a sort of pleasure from the strangeness of the collocation by which the adjective is put after its substantive: starting from the principle that the reverse is the true English order of collocation. This is proper to poetry and high style; and it is one of the traces which early French culture has left on our literature:—

‘Seed royall.’—2 Kings xi. 1.

‘Devastation universal.’—Isaac Taylor, *Natural History of Enthusiasm*.

‘A spring perennial rising in the heart.’

Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, viii. 958.

**564.** Our habits of collocation are very firmly established, so much so, that the Part of Speech is chiefly determined by the position of the word. This is only the reverse statement of that which has been already exemplified above (554), where it has been shewn that each Part of Speech has its own proper situation. A crucial test of the importance of this habit may be found if we can get a word which has in the course of our history changed its speech-part-ship. Such a word we have in *only*, which was mostly an adjective in our elder literature, and is now mostly an adverb. In the following line of Spenser,

‘But th’ only shade and semblant of a knight.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 2. 38,

*only* is an adjective equivalent to *mere*; as ‘the mere shade.’ If we preserve the order we must change the word: but if we will keep the word we must change the order, and say, ‘only the shade.’

In such cases the unaccustomed reader is checked by meeting what seems a familiar word in a strange position.

‘Thou art only the most Highest over all the earth.’—*Psalms* lxxxiii. 18, elder version.

In the manuscript Prayer Book of 1661 we read: ‘In the time of the plague . . . when none of the neighbours can be gotten to communicate with the sick, . . . the Minister may only communicate with him.’ The Fourth Report (1870) of the Commissioners on Public Worship contains the pro-

posed amendment: 'the Minister alone may communicate with him.' In this instance we have a change both of the word and of the position; and the double change carries withal a new meaning.

Collocation changes the grammatical character of the symbol *of*, which is an adverb if we say, according to English idiom, 'that which I spoke to you of' (Genesis xxviii. 15); but a preposition if we use the French construction, 'that of which I spoke to you.'

565. But the palmary example of the great import of collocation in our language is that of the transformation of a substantive into an adjective by position alone. Instances abound of the alternate use of the same word as substantive and adjective; thus, *horse chestnut*, *chestnut horse*; *School Board*, *Board School*. There is hardly anything more characteristic of our language than this particular faculty.

*cottage dames.*

'What sages would have died to learn,  
Now taught by cottage dames.'

*Christian Year*, 'Catechism.'

*noontide solace, summer grass, mother earth.*

'Like a shadow thrown  
Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,  
Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay  
For noontide solace on the summer grass,  
The warm lap of his mother earth:—

William Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Bk. VII.

*stone weapons, stone implements, stone age.*

'Stone weapons of many kinds were still in use during the age of bronze, and even during that of iron, so that the mere presence of a few stone implements is not in itself sufficient evidence that any given "find" belongs to the stone age.'—Sir John Lubbock, *Pre-Historic Times*, second ed. 1869; p. 3.

*vine disease, cattle disease, potato disease.*

'In Hungary there has been no vine disease, no cattle disease, and no potato disease.'

Permanent characters are stamped on words from the accident of their having survived in a particular collocation. The combination 'weird sisters' in *Macbeth* being the parent of all extant usage of *weird*, it has resulted that this word is known only as an adjective to the modern language, although in Saxon it was known only as a substantive, namely *wyrd*, fate.

566. This constructive juxtaposition of two nouns stands in an intimate relation with that great body of English compounds which will be treated of in the first section of the next chapter. But nearly related as these two features are, they must be carefully distinguished from one another, as their very tendency to blend makes it the more necessary to keep them well apart. Just as the lowest stage of organised existence is that in which we are met by the difficulty of distinguishing between animal and vegetable life, so here, in the most elementary region of syntax, we are hardly able to keep the organism of the phrase distinct from that of the word. When *grass green* could make its negative *grass ungreen* (509) it was not yet a compound as now it is. In many modern instances there is fair room for doubt whether two words are in the compound or the construct state. Perhaps some of the following may be so regarded: *race horse, horse race; field path, path field; herb garden, garden herb*. These may be written either with or without the hyphen, that is to say, either as compound words or as words in construction. In such cases it is not to be supposed that principle is wanting, but that through the fineness of the difference our discernment is at fault in the application of the principle.

The following from a first-class print is a clear instance of a misplaced hyphen; it ought to be written thus—

*marriage settlements.*

'The Married Women's Property Act, 1870, was intended to prevent the personal property of a woman, her wages and earnings, being at the absolute mercy and control of her husband's creditors. It was supposed that it would be an especial protection to that poorer class of women whose property before marriage was too small to be worth the expense and life-long trouble of marriage-settlements.'

567. Before the development of flexion and symbolism, there was a dearth of means for expressing those modifications which are now effected by adverbs and adverbial phrases. In the collocational stage of syntax, the chief means resorted to for this end was repetition. Early languages bear about them traces of this contrivance. The Hebrew is remarkable for this. The following little specimen may serve as an indication. In Mark vi. 39, 40, there occurs a Hebraism in the Greek text which is not rendered, and indeed hardly could be rendered, in English. The Hebrew (we will call it) says 'companies companies,' and 'ranks ranks.' The English says 'by companies' and 'in ranks.' Here we have a certain idea expressed in the one by a syntax of collocation, for repetition is a form of collocation; and in the other by a syntax of symbolism, namely, by the intervention of prepositions. Here then we have the most ancient form of expressing this idea, contrasted with the most modern. Between these two lies the flexional way of saying the same thing. The true Greek idiom or the Latin gives it to us flexionally in the forms *εὐληδόν* and *catervatim*, which we cannot match by any extant expression in English.

568. It seldom happens that means which have once been largely used, even though they should be superseded by

newer contrivances, are entirely abolished. We still have recourse to mere repetition for heightening an effect ; as—

‘A lesson too too hard for living clay.’

*The Faery Queene*, iii. 4. 26.

‘Oh that this too too solid flesh would melt!’

*Hamlet*, i. 2.

‘*Here we go up up up; and here we go down down down*, is a rule of universal application, expressing the average, the balance, which prevails in human affairs.’—Frederic Eden, *The Nile without a Dragoman*, 1871; ch. xii.

569. We will close this section with the flat infinitive, or infinitive expressed by position alone. The most peculiarly English use is that of the infinitive after the verb *do*, as I do think, I did expect.

But the construction is precisely similar in such cases as the following:—

I will hope.

I shall go.

You cannot think.

You may try.

You might get.

They would have.

They should not have.

They shall smart.

In all these the final word is an infinitive by position. In Saxon it would have been expressed by a flexional infinitive. Our present flat infinitive cannot therefore be derived from Saxon, but must be regarded as an example in language of a tendency to reversion from the more



advanced and developed to the more primitive and archetypal forms of speech.

570. The positional stage of syntax is most highly displayed in the Chinese language. This is in itself a confirmation of the claim which Chinese literature makes to an exceedingly high antiquity. Speaking generally, it may be said that the whole of Chinese grammar depends upon position. Chinese words change their grammatical character as substantives, adjectives, verbs, according to their relative positions in the collocation of the sentence (223). M. Julien has published a Chinese syntax with a title in which this principle is conspicuously displayed<sup>1</sup>. From a notice of this work in the *Academy* the following illustration is borrowed:—

‘For instance, the character *tch'i*, “to govern,” if placed before a substantive remains a verb, as *tch'i kouïe*, “to govern a kingdom;” if the order of these two characters is reversed, they signify “the kingdom is governed;” and if the character *tch'i* be placed after *chi*, “a magistrate,” it becomes a substantive, and the two words are then to be translated “the administration of the magistrates.”’

Very remarkable is the plasticity of signification which such a grammatical system demands. I imagine that the best European illustration of the Chinese language is to be found in our flat syntax, and the second best in the German compounds.

It must not be supposed that the Chinese language stands alone in the possession of such a syntax: what it does stand alone in, is in the development of a great literature through means so rudimentary. The whole outer field of so-called

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<sup>1</sup> *Syntaxe Nouvelle de la Langue Chinoise, fondée sur la Position des Mots, suivie de deux Traités sur les Particules, et les principaux Termes de Grammaire, d'une Table des Idiotismes, de Fables, de Légendes et d'Apologues traduits mot à mot. Par M. Stanislas Julien. Paris: Librairie de Maisonneuve. London: Trübner and Co., 1869.*

Allophylian languages, those namely which lie outside the Aryan and Semitic families, appear to be of this character. Mr. Farrar, in his *Families of Speech*, p. 160, divides these into—(1) Isolating, i.e. monosyllabic and unsyntactical; (2) Agglutinating; (3) Polysynthetic:—and all these varieties are but so many different stages and conditions of the positional. This is therefore to be regarded as the basement storey of all syntax, and it is largely discoverable in the English language.

## II. SYNTAX OF FLEXION.

571. Flexion is any modification of a word whereby its relation to the sentence is indicated. The power which flexion has in this respect is very variable, in some languages great, in others small; in the classical stage of the Latin language it was so great as almost to eclipse and suspend the importance of collocation. This has been indicated at the opening of the previous section.

The English language is at the opposite extreme: the syntactic import of flexion is with us very low, and as compared with the import of collocation, it may be said almost to count for nothing.

The syntax of the English language is therefore at its weakest in this division. We can only collect a few remaining features, which have lived through the collision of the transition period, and have up to the present time defied the innovations of the symbolic movement. We will consider these relics in order, taking first those of the nounal, and afterwards those of the verbal flexion.

572. We have retained the genitive singular of nouns, as 'Simon's wife's mother,' *Luke* iv. 38. This possessival

termination detached itself, and passed into a pronoun-flexion by a sort of degeneracy, as in 'John his book.' An original document of the year 1525, by the Prior of Bath, in the possession of Edward Howse, Esq., begins thus: 'To all true Cristen people to whome this present wrytyng Indentour shall come William Hollowaye by Gode is suffer'nce Priour,' &c. And again in the same: 'As they haue doone in tyme paste whan the saide pastures were in the lorde is handes, Soo that thereby the lorde is owne werkes elles where and woode carriage be nott nestoppeded att any tyme.'

This supplies the intermediate step between *-es* and *his*; and the following quotation supplies an example of the sort of occasion on which this separable flexion would be felt as a convenience:—

*his.*

'The Cathedrall Church of Christe in Oxford of Kinge Henry theight his fowndac'on.'—*Assignment* by John Haryngton to William Blanchard of Catterne, 1594.

**573.** Some genitival phrases we have lost altogether, as *fer dayes*, equivalent in the fifteenth century to far on in the day; and *early days*, early in the day, which though not extinct, seems now to be regarded as a plural.

*fer dayes.*

'Ther was a ladi that duelled fast bi the chirche, that toke every day so longe tyme to make her redy that it made wery and angri the person of the chirche and the parissheues to abide after her. And she happed to abide so longe on a sonday that it was fer dayes, and every man said to other, "This day we trow shall not this lady be kemed and arraied."'  
*La Tour Landry*, ed. T. Wright, ch. xxxi.

*early days.*

'Tis but early dayes.'—W. Shakspeare, *Troilus and Cressida*, iv. 5. 12.

To this group belongs the formula *nowadays*, written in the fifteenth century *now a dayes*.

Our adverbial genitive is but a relic, and so it has been during the whole of the present period (435). Indeed it has never been so strong with us as in German. Perhaps we could not find anywhere in our literature so bold an example of this kind as Luther's *stradß laufß* in Acts xvi. 11, where we have 'with a straight course.'

574. Of pronominal flexion there is but little remaining which really serves any purpose of syntax. The accusatives *me*, *him*, *her*, *whom*, and the genitive *whose*, are the chief. In such cases as *of me*, *to him*, *from them*, it is true that *me*, *him*, *them*, are inflections; but then the relation which they once served to express is now expressed by the preposition. *Mine* may be regarded as a flexion by an archæological effort of mind, for it is an old genitive of *me*. But in its ordinary use there is no call to think of this, for it appears as an adjectival pronoun. When it is so used as to shew a trace of its old genitival extraction, then it is accompanied with a preposition, and so comes under the next division, as 'That boy of mine.'

We have, however, dative pronouns without the preposition, as in *give me*, *tell him*, and in our elder literature more frequently:—

*me.*

'That my hand may be restored mee againe.'—1 *Kings* xiii. 6.

In the following quotation *him* in the second part is equivalent to the *unto him* that went before:—

'Lend not vnto him that is mightier then my selfe; for if thou lendest him, count it but lost.'—*Ecclesiasticus* viii. 12.

In the next quotation we should now say *to him*:—

'And sent him them to Jezreel.'—2 *Kings* x. 7.

Not even a poet in our day could write *her* for *to her* in such a structure as this:—

‘His lovely words her seemd due recompence.’

. *The Faery Queene*, i. 3. 30.

*Methinks* is now written as one word. It consists of *me* in the dative case, and *thinks*, an old impersonal equivalent to the Latin *videatur*, radically connected no doubt with our verb ‘I think,’ ‘he thinks,’ but quite distinct from it. The distinction is kept up in German between *denkt* the verb of thought, and *dünkt* of seeming, which is that now before us.

575. A noted instance of pronominal flexion which we have borrowed from the French, and which has become thoroughly English, though it has long lain under the disapproval of the powers of Latin scholarship, is the use of the objective case in the expressions *it is me*, *it is him*. Latin syntax has almost taught us to think that *it is I* is the only correct formula<sup>1</sup>. This latter is however a thing of no definite lineage; it is a hybrid between French idiom, which says *c’est moi*, and Latin scholasticism, which dictates that the substantive verb must have the same case after it as before it. Before this conflict of French against supposed Latin, there was a native idiom which ran very close to the real idiom both of Latin and of Greek in regard to this formula. Our pure mother tongue had it thus: *I am it*, *thou art it*, *he is it*, or *It am I*, &c. And the Germans retain with fidelity the family style, with their *Ich bin es*, *Er ist es*. Let us compare the sister-dialects in John ix. 9:—

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<sup>1</sup> For a lively statement of the case, see Dean Alford, in *Queen’s English*.

*Anglo-Saxon, 995.**Luther, 1534.*

Sume cwædon, He hyt is; sume      Etlīche sprachen: Er ist es.  
 cwædon, Nese, ac is him gelic. He      Etlīche aber: Er ist ihm āhnlich.  
 cwæþ sōþlice, Ic hit eom.      Er selbst aber sprach: Ich bin es.

• If to the above we add the *s* of most nouns plural and the *EN* of a very few; also the *s* of the pronouns *his, hers, its, ours, yours, theirs*; and further, the *-er* and *-est* of adjectival comparison,—we have exhausted the relics of nounal and pronounal flexion which survive in the English language.

**576.** But the verb is the great stronghold of flexion. More than any other part of speech it attracts and attaches inflections to itself in times when flexion is growing: and on the other hand, when flexion is on the wane, the verb is the most retentive of its relics, and the most reluctant to part with them. There is no language of Western Europe in which the verb has parted with its flexion more than in English. The Gothic languages are the most advanced in this respect, and especially the Danish, Swedish, and English.

The verbal inflections, which are still used to express person, tense, or mood, are as follows:—

(See) seest, sees, seeth, saw, sawest, seen, seeing.

(Look) lookest, looks, looketh, looked, lookedst, looking.

Half of these are antiquated, and all that are in habitual use are,—

sees, saw, seen, seeing.

looks, looked, looking.

**577.** A feature worthy of contemplation is that whereby the flexion which expresses past time is employed also for contingency or uncertainty. It appears as if the link of

sympathy between the two things thus rendered by a self-same formula were remoteness from the speaker's possession.

Looking at the word *attempted* by itself we should associate it with the idea of past time, but in the following sentence it expresses contingency and not time, or if it regards time at all, the time is future.

'His power would break and shiver like glass, if he attempted it.'

In the following quotations this twofold power is well seen in the form

*had.*

'I say not that she ne had kunnyng  
What harme was, or els she  
Had coulede no good, so thinketh me,  
And trewly, for to speke of trouth,  
But she had had, it had be routh.'

Chaucer, *The Booke of the Dutchesse*, 996.

'He had caught a great cold, had he had no other clothes to wear than the skin of a bear not yet killed.'—Thomas Fuller.

Hence it comes that the apodosis to *had* is often *would be*, or *would have*.

'If this man had not twelve thousand a-year, he would be a very stupid fellow.'—Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ch. iv.

'And some among you held, that if the King  
Had seen the sight, he would have sworn the vow.'

Alfred Tennyson, *The Holy Grail*.

578. In the single case of the verb *to be*, however, there are distinct forms for the subjunctive tenses. *Be* was originally indicative, as it still is in Devonshire, and in our Bible: 'They be blind leaders of the blind.'—*Matt.* xv. 14. But inasmuch as the present had another form *is*, *are*, a division of labour took place, whereby *be* was reserved for

the subjunctive and conditional present. In the revision of the Common Prayer Book in 1611, *are* was substituted for *be* in forty-three places, and the indicative *be* was left standing in one place only, namely this—‘Which be they?’<sup>1</sup>

The subjunctive thus recently acquired is now antiquated; and not even in a sermon of the present day should we meet with the like of this of Isaac Barrow’s:—

‘Be we never so urgently set, or closely intent upon any work (be we feeding, be we travelling, be we trading, be we studying), nothing yet can forbid, but that we may together wedge in a thought concerning God’s goodness, and bolt forth a word of Praise for it.’—*The Duty of Prayer*.

On the same principle *was* and *were* took distinct offices:—

*were*.

‘I am not able to unfold, how this cautelous enterprise of licencing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleasantly dispos’d, could not well avoid to liken it to the exploit of that gallant man who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his Park-gate.’—John Milton, *Areopagitica*.

‘If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years were to be under pittance, and prescription, and compulsion, what were vertue but a name, what praise could be then due to well-doing, what grammercy to be sober, just, or continent?’—*Id.*

579. This *were* is not so freely employed now as it once was, and if it goes out, it will be a beauty lost. But however it may be with colloquy and familiar prose, it can hardly be spared from poetry and the style of dignity:—

‘But to live by law,  
Acting the law we live by without fear;  
And, because right is right, to follow right,  
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.’

Alfred Tennyson, *Enone*.

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<sup>1</sup> From the beautiful photozincographic facsimile done at the Ordnance Survey Office in Southampton.



Should these subjunctives *be* and *were* fall into complete desuetude, they will leave behind some fossil traces of their existence in the conjunction *howbeit*, and in the phrasal adverb *as it were*.

In the case of ordinary verbs, the subjunctive is distinguished from the indicative merely by the denudation of flexion; but this distinction now lives in poetry only:—

‘and aged to age,  
Though all else pass and fail, delivereth  
At least the great tradition of their God.’

Frederic W. H. Myers, *St. John the Baptist*.

580. We will close this section as we closed the previous one, with the infinitive. The old grammatical infinitive in *-en* lingered in our language as late as the Elizabethan period. Thus Surrey:—

*sayen.*

‘Give place, ye lovers, here before  
That spent your boasts and brags in vain;  
My lady’s beauty passeth more  
The best of yours, I dare well sayen,  
Than doth the sun the candle light,  
Or brightest day the darkest night.’

We lost the infinitive in *-en*, but we unconsciously retained the same thing in a slightly disguised form, namely with the ending *-ing*.

In the fifteenth century we find an intermediate and variable termination, *-yng* and *-yn*. The Promptorium Parvulorum has it throughout in the form *-yñ*. The following from Caxton exhibits both:—

*makyng and reducyn.*

‘Besechyng al them that this litel werke shal see / here / or rede to haue me for excused for the rude & symple makyng and reducyn in to our englissh.’—*The Game of the Cbesse*, A.D. 1474; Preface.

580 a. The tendency to turn *-an* or *-en* into *-ing* shews

itself elsewhere: thus, *Abbandun* has become *Abingdon*; and we are all pretty familiar with such forms as *captling*, *chicking* (*Little Dorrit*, 184), *childring*, *garding*, *lunching*. When the mind has lost its hold on the meaning of a given form, the organs of speech are apt to slide into any contiguous form that has more present currency or is more vital with present meaning. The *-an* or *-en* of the infinitive became *-ing* because it was surrounded with nouns and participles in *-ing* which differed from the infinitive by a difference too fine to be held-to in the transition and Early English periods, with their neglect of the vernacular. Hence it has become traditional to explain this form always either as a substantive or as a present participle. But there is a large class of instances to which these explanations will not apply. In such a sentence as the following, 'Europeans are no match for Orientals at evading a question,' *evading* is clearly a verb governing its substantive; and yet it is not a participle, for it has nothing adjectival about it. By an infinitive I understand a verb in a substantival aspect; by a participle, a verb in an adjectival aspect. In the saying of Rowland Hill to his co-pastor Theophilus Jones, 'Never mind breaking grammar if,' &c., the word *breaking* is clearly a verb, and can be no otherwise grammatically designated than as an infinitive. The nature of the participle is seen in the following:—

'All is hazard that we have,  
Here is nothing bideing;  
Dayes of pleasure are like streams  
Through faire Medows gliding.'

Ballad Society, vol. i. p. 350.

**580 b.** The analysis of a sentence is, however, a subjective act, as we have already observed; and if any insist on mentally supplying the formula requisite to establish the participial character of every verb in *-ing*, I know of no argument

potent enough to restrain them. But there is a large number of instances in which I think that whether the case be historically or grammatically tested, it must be pronounced an infinitive. As this is a point of some importance, I have collected rather a copious list of examples of the infinitive in *-ing*.

Historically there is no case clearer than that in which it follows verbs of coming or going; as—

‘ffor yonder I see her come rydinge.’

*Percy Ballads*, ed. Furnivall, vol. i. p. 160.

‘This Lady when shee came thus ryding,’—*Id.* p. 161.

Sometimes the grammatical position is further illustrated by the help of the French *à* before these infinitives:—

‘Oh how shall the dumb go a courting?’ Bloomfield.

**580 c.** Perhaps the plainest instances (to the modern grammatical sense) are those in which the word has a verbal government, and yet cannot be accounted a participle, as—

*dropping, drawing.*

‘Defend me, therefore, common sense, say I,  
From reveries so airy, from the toil  
Of dropping buckets into empty wells,  
And growing old in drawing nothing up.’

William Cowper, *The Garden*.

*finding.*

‘And I can see that Mrs. Grant is anxious for her not finding Mansfield dull as winter comes on.’—Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, vol. ii. ch. 3.

*giving, acquiring.*

‘I am convinced a man might sit down as systematically and as successfully to the study of wit, as he might to the study of the mathematics; and I would answer for it, that, by giving up only six hours a day to being witty, he should come on prodigiously before midsummer, so that his

friends should hardly know him again. For what is there to hinder the mind from gradually acquiring a habit of attending to the lighter relations of ideas in which wit consists? Punning grows upon everybody, and punning is the wit of words.'—Sydney Smith, *Wit and Humour*.

*simplifying.*

'I feel it a surprise, every time I see Parry: there seems to be a power of simplifying whatever comes near him, an atmosphere in which trifles die a natural death.'—*Memoirs of Sir W. E. Parry*.

*believing in.*

'Babes are not expected to prove their relationship before believing in their mothers.'—Laurence Oliphant, *Piccadilly* (1870), p. 275.

*organizing, gathering, obtaining, distributing, detecting.*

'Organizing charitable relief over areas conterminous with those of the Poor Law, and gathering together all the representative forces we can for common action, seems to us the best method of obtaining the two important aims of distributing judicious charity and detecting imposition.'—Alsager Hay Hill, *Times*, October 22, 1869.

*marrying, abandoning.*

'Their choice lies, then, only between marrying money, or abandoning all their connexions, habits, and amusements.'—John Boyd-Kinnear, *Woman's Work*, 353.

*creating.*

'It does not seem safe in regard to this to rely on the ordinary rule of demand creating supply.'—Sir J. T. Coleridge, *Keble*, p. 381.

*predicting, conspiring.*

'Some people will never distinguish between predicting an eclipse and conspiring to bring it about.'

*leaving.*

'Cæsar spent his winters at Lucca without leaving his province.'—E. A. Freeman, *Essays*, vii, p. 166.

**580 d.** A very good illustration of our point is furnished by sentences of the varying type, thus:—'It is quite possible for you to carry your point, without gaining your end.'

Here the infinitive-regnant with *to* stands counterposed with our flexional infinitive :—

‘Where the case is so plain, it is not for the dignity of this house to inquire instead of acting.’—*Times*, February 11, 1870; Summary.

When there are a great many infinitives to be expressed, it is here as elsewhere the delight of our language to have the means of avoiding monotony by variation ; as—

‘But it is clear that, as society goes on accumulating powers and gifts, the one hope of society is in men’s modest and unselfish use of them; in simplicity and nobleness of spirit increasing, as things impossible to our fathers become easy and familiar to us; in men caring for better things than money and ease and honour; in being able to see the riches of the world increase and not set our hearts upon them; in being able to admire and forego.’—R. W. Church, *Sermons*, ii. 1868.

580 e. A case that deserves a place apart is that of *being* and *having* when they enter into composite infinitives, active or passive :—

‘The present apparent hopelessness of a really Œcumenical Council being assembled.’—John Keble, *Life*, p. 425.

In the next piece it would be allowable to substitute ‘to have heard’ for ‘having heard’ :—

‘I recollect having heard the noble lord the member for Tiverton deliver in this House one of the best speeches I ever listened to. On that occasion the noble lord gloried in the proud name of England, and, pointing to the security with which an Englishman might travel abroad, he triumphed in the idea that his countrymen might exclaim, in the spirit of the ancient Roman, *Civis Romanus sum*.’—John Bright, *Speeches*, 1853, ed. J. E. T. Rogers.

At the close of the following quotation it would mean the same, and be equally correct, if ‘being’ were put in the place of *to be* :—

‘I did not show all my dissatisfaction, however, for that would only have estranged us; and it is not required, nay, it may be wrong, to show all you feel or think: what is required of us is, not to show what we do not feel or think; for that is to be false.’—George MacDonald, *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, ch. xii.

In the early days of the infinitive with *to* it was sometimes pushed (like a new toy) beyond the sphere since allotted to it, and we find it in places where the present language would render it by the infinitive in *-ing*. Spenser has

‘ For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake  
Could save the son of Thetis from to die’;

which in modern English would be expressed thus:—‘ His having-been-dipped in Lethe could not save Achilles from dying.’

580 f. The expression in the following line is certainly condensed, and the grammar by no means explicit, but I should be curious to know by what process of thought the word *writing* could be accepted in any other character than that of an infinitive:—

‘ Nature’s chief master-piece is writing well.’

Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, 725.

The expression ‘about doing anything’ is not generally approved by grammarians, yet it is met with in authors of repute:—

‘ Mrs. Wilson smiled, and, addressing herself to Mrs. Benson, said, Now, madam, we will, if you please, return to the house; for I fancy by this time dinner is nearly ready, and my husband and sons are about coming home.’—Mrs. Trimmer, *Fabulous Histories*, ch. xx.

‘ He was about retracing his steps, when he was suddenly transfixed to the spot by a sudden appearance.’—Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers*, ch. xxiii.

The aversion which there is to this particular expression might perhaps be modified if the verb in *-ing* were acknowledged to be an infinitive. I apprehend that the ground of

the objection to all such terms of expression as 'before coming,' 'since leaving,' is that under the participial hypothesis of 'coming' the logical sentiment is dissatisfied.

580g. The German scholar will hardly require to have the reality of this old infinitive urged upon him, if he marks how often the German infinitive can only be rendered by the English verb in *-ing*.

*Luther.*

1611.

Auch haben sie mich nicht gefunden im Tempel mit jemand reden, oder einen Aufruhr machen im Wolf,— 'And they neither found me in the Temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people,'—  
*Acts xxiv. 12.*

There are some English constructions in which this infinitive stands out in as unequivocal a character as a German or a Latin infinitive could do. Such is the case with *attempting* in the following extract:—

'I am not sure that it is of very much use attempting to define exactly what is meant by Honouring parents.'—R. W. Dale, *The Ten Commandments*, p. 125.

The really dubious cases are those which arise from the natural contiguity of the infinitive to the noun-substantive. In fact these two blend so closely as to defy all attempts at a line of demarcation<sup>1</sup>. I will therefore only say, that in such instances as the following I think the meaning is better apprehended by regarding them as verb-substantives, that is to say, infinitives.

*versing*.

'I once more smell the dew and rain,  
 And relish versing.' George Herbert.

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<sup>1</sup> One could not even convince a determined adversary on the ground of their governing a case, if he were quick enough to remember that in Plautus the Latin substantive in *-io* governs an accusative case just like a verb.

*flying.*

‘Johnny watched the swallows trying  
Which was cleverest at flying.’

*prelating, labouring, lording.*

‘Amend therefore, and ye that be prelates loke well to your office, for right prelatynge is busye labourynge and not lordyng.’—Hugh Latimer, *The Ploughers*, 1549.

**580 h.** While we are on this flexional infinitive, I must call attention to one of the finest of our provincialisms. It is when this infinitive is used as something between active and passive, as if it were a neutral voice, like the so-called middle voice in Greek. In all classes of society in Yorkshire it may be heard; as, ‘Do you want the tea making,’ ‘I want my coat brushing,’ ‘Father wants the door shutting,’ &c.<sup>1</sup>

We may well contend for the infinitival character of this *-ing*, if only to rescue from the wreck of our old flexional system some time-honoured relic. The English language

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<sup>1</sup> In the prospectus of a projected almanack which was circulated in November, 1869, and which was dated from Darwen, Lancashire, it is said that ‘The miscellaneous matter on the other pages of the almanack treats of topics which the clergy are likely to want prominently placing before their parishioners.’ Not very unlike this is the expression in the Offertory rubric ‘While these sentences are in reading.’ In modern English we should make it passive, and say ‘While these sentences are being read.’ Indeed we may regret the loss of this Yorkshire form, for we lack a middle verb—a verb neither active nor passive. The French have managed it in their reflex verbs, as *se marier*, and the Italians thus, *maritarsi*; which goes into English either by an active or passive. ‘Je veux me marier’ may either be turned ‘I will marry’ or ‘I intend to be married.’ The nearest approach to a distinct provision for a middle verb is that which has already been touched on above, 299—‘I mean to get married.’ The French reflex verb was partly copied, but it never reached the same effect. In many cases it is inapplicable; we cannot say, ‘Marry one’s self’: and though we can render *se sauver*, ‘save oneself,’ yet no one would venture to use this middle form in 1 Cor. i. 18, *τοῖς σωζομένοις*, as in the French of Carrières, ‘pour ceux qui se sauvent.’



has divested itself of flexion to a most remarkable degree. But we must not suppose that when a language puts off the garb of flexion it becomes with her as if she had never put it on.

A language that had not passed through the flexional stage could never have produced such a line as this :—

‘Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais’d.’

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ix. 177.

If it was difficult to accomplish the task of the first section of this chapter, and delineate in a complete manner a syntax of collocation, that difficulty was due to the influence of flexion. Flexion itself may pass away, but its consequences remain.

In a deflexionised language like ours, though almost all the flexions have themselves disappeared, they have not carried away with them those modifications of arrangement and collocation of which they first furnished the occasion.

### III. OF SYNTAX BY SYMBOLIC WORDS.

581. The most convenient plan for this section will be the division into the symbolism of the verb and the symbolism of the noun.

This division will not only be found to rest upon a sound philological basis, but it will also prove convenient from a historical point of view. For that explicitness of syntax which we have acquired by the development of symbolism, is drawn partly from the Gothic and partly from the Roman source. It may be said, speaking in general terms, that the explicit verb has come to us from the Saxon, and the explicit noun from the French.

*The Explicit Verb.*

The most signal example of a symbolic word is the symbol-verb 'to be.' From the moment that this verb had acquired its symbolic value, we may say that the reign of flexion was doomed. Not that it is the universal solvent of flexion, but it has been the chief means of undermining it in its own favourite stronghold, the verb. We are told by Sanskrit scholars that this symbol is found in the oldest Sanskrit monuments, and that none of the Aryan languages are without it. But if we compare its functions now in the great languages of Europe with those which it had in Greek and Latin, we shall find that the agency of this verb TO BE has greatly enlarged its sphere. Take for example the passive verb, which had a complete flexional apparatus in Greek as *φλοῦμαι* with its parts, and in Latin as *amor* with its parts—all these flexions have disappeared, and in place of each one of them has stepped in a function of this symbolic verb.

|         |                        |
|---------|------------------------|
| Amor,   | I am loved.            |
| Amabar, | I was loved.           |
| Amabor, | I shall be loved.      |
| Amarer, | I should be loved, &c. |

This substitution of symbol-verbs for inflections is found equally in French and German:—Je suis aimé; Ich bin geliebt. But in English we have our own peculiar little openings for enlarging this ever-growing power of BE. Such idiomatic terms as 'I am to go,' 'She is to do it,' 'Such a thing is to be,' 'I'm to be queen of the May,' are thoroughly English. On the other hand, 'Where have you been? I have been to seek for you,' is French—'Où avez vous été? J'ai été vous chercher.'

**582.** The great power of this symbol verb for revolution-

izing flexional languages has lain a long time dormant. The Hebrew is an eminently flexional language, especially in regard to its system of verbs. Now the symbol-verb is there found in full development, but in very limited action. The following statement will give some idea of the case. In the English version of the little Book of Jonah, I count forty-two occurrences of the verb 'to be,' but when I refer to the original, I find that only six of these are represented by the verb 'to be' in Hebrew. And as one of the cases is not symbolic but substantive, we have the still wider ratio of five to forty-one.

It is this extension of the field of the symbol-verb which has occasioned that stagnation of verbal development and the corresponding enlargement of the nounal ranks which has been noticed above (386).

**583.** When a new movement of this sort rises in language, it commonly pushes itself forward till it awakens resistance. So we see this symbol-verb ramifying with luxuriant variations, such as 'is being,' 'was being,' 'have to be,' 'had better be.'

'Eric was a high-spirited son of a jarl of Jadar in Norway, who, opposing the encroachments of the king upon his feudal rights, in common with his class, was forced to flee the country. Escaping with his son, he established himself in Iceland, which was then being peopled by such refugees from tyranny and wrong; and a society was being formed which, for love of liberty and the actual possession of republican freedom, has never been excelled.'—Isaac J. Hayes, M.D., *Greenland*, ch. iv.

*were being.*

'He saw, too, that in the name of liberty a hundred artificial and impossible laws—laws not only limiting individual freedom, but binding nature herself, if nature could be bound, and annihilating every wholesome influence in order to form one Frankenstein-monster of a state—were being seriously considered.'—Mrs. Oliphant, *Montalembert*, vol. ii. p. 142.

\* *have to be.*

'Many things have to be remembered before we can reason with safety on this intricate subject.'—*The Times*, February 14, 1873.

*had better be.*

‘A history of religious or political convictions conducted on this system had better be entitled A history of prejudices.’—J. Venn, *Hulsean Lectures for 1869*, p. 32.

From an early friend of Dr. Newman’s I learnt that he had long ago expressed a strong dislike to this cumulate formula. I desired to be more particularly informed, and Dr. Newman wrote as follows to his friend: ‘It surprises me that my antipathy to “is being” existed so long ago. It is as keen and bitter now as ever it was, though I don’t pretend to be able to defend it.’ After giving certain reasons (which are omitted, because this is a point in which reasons are secondary and a good judgment when we can get one is primary), he continues: ‘Now I know nothing of the history of the language, and cannot tell whether all this will stand, but this I do know, that, rationally or irrationally, I have an undying, never-dying hatred to “is being,” whatever arguments are brought in its favour. At the same time I fully grant that it is so convenient in the present state of the language, that I will not pledge myself I have never been guilty of using it<sup>1</sup>.’

**584.** The topmost pinnacle of symbolic phraseology is attained when the symbol-verb joins with the symbol-adverb to produce a predication of great compass with proportionately vague and often untranslatable import; as *to be off, about, up to him*, with which may be joined other hardly less symbolic phrases, as *to take to, to come by, to go in for*, and the imperatives *come on, go to*.

‘I had no intention of *going in for*—that is the phrase now—going in for the romantic.’—George MacDonald, *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, ch. vii.

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<sup>1</sup> Every one sees that these hearty words were not measured for print, and I am the more obliged to Dr. Newman for allowing this use of his undesigned evidence.

And by such means we attain to a subtle and impalpable diction, such as is possible only in languages that have had many centuries of culture. And in proportion as the sense of such symbolic phrases is no longer hereditary or etymological, but the masterful work of the aggregate mind, we return to an interjectional pliability of signification, by which we perceive that we have come round full circle and are approaching the point from which we set out. Thus *come on* is no longer a call to approach, but simply a note of encouragement, as in Exodus i. 10, where both Luther and De Wette express it by the interjection *wohlan*; and Miles Coverdale has 'Vp.'

585. Keeping a sort of company with the verb TO BE, there is found in all the great languages a verb which signifies to come to be, to get to be. This is in Greek *γίνεσθαι*, in Latin *fieri*, in French *devenir*, and in German *werden*—symbol-verbs of great mark each in its own language. In our native tongue the old word was *weorðan*, the analogue of the German *werden*, but we gradually lost it; and now we retain only a relic of it in the imperative or subjunctive *worth*, as in the expression, 'Woe worth the day.' Instead of this *weorðan* we have qualified a new word for its place, a compound of the verb *come*, namely *become*. In early times the sense of coming was dominant in this word. In the Saxon Gospels, Luke ii. 38, 'theos thære tide becumende' answers to our 'she coming-in that instant.'

Even as late as Shakspeare this sense was still vigorous; as—

'*Riu.* But Madam, where is Warwicke then become?

*Gray.* I am inform'd that he comes towards London.'

3 *Henry VI*, iv. 4. 25.

In our days *where* and *become* will not construe together, because the latter has lost all signification of locality. Either

we should ask 'Where is Warwick gone to?' or 'What is become of Warwick?' In short, the word has been thoroughly symbolised, and so qualified to take the place of our lost verb *weorðan*. And here again, as in so many other places, we have followed the French. It is the French *devenir* that we give expression to (nay, that we mimic) in our modern verb *become*.

This is however a matter of only superficial importance so far as syntax is concerned. What does it matter whether a certain function is discharged by *weorðan* or by *devenir*? it is functions and not roots that structural philology attends to. In so far as we construe our *become* differently from the construction of the old *weorðan*, so far is the change structural, and no further. Broadly speaking, the analogues of this *become* have a general resemblance of construction in all the great languages, so that the fact of our having changed our word under French tuition is a matter of small structural consideration.

**586.** Now we come to a symbol-verb of a peculiarly insular character, namely, the auxiliary *do*.

And in touching this verb, let us first dispose of that use which is common to us with French, and even, though less markedly, with other languages. I mean that use in which it figures as a representative or vicegerent for any antecedent verb:—

'A wise man will make better use of an idle pamphlet, than a fool will do of sacred Scripture.'—John Milton, *Areopagitica*.

The auxiliary use is different. It sprang from the French *faire*, as in *faire faire*, 'to cause a thing to be done.' And, at first, even in English, its action was just the same as is that of the auxiliary *faire* to this day in French. Thus 'dede translate' meant not the same as our 'did translate,'

but 'caused to be translated.' At length it became a symbolic expression of tense, both in affirmative and negative sentences. This is its peculiarly English function. The following quotations exhibit these two uses in combination:—

'I delybered in myself to translate it in to our maternal tonge / And whan I so had achyeued [achieved] the sayd translacion / I dyde doo set in enprynte a certeyn nombre of theym / Which anone were depessed and solde.'—William Caxton, *The Game of the Chesse*, A.D. 1474; Preface.

'My lord Abbot of Westmynster did do shewe to me late certayn enyduences wryton in old Englysshe, for to reduce it into Englysshe now vsid,' &c.—William Caxton, *Æneidos*, Prologue (Blaydes' *Life of Caxton*, vol. i. p. 66).

But now it has dropped half its function, for it is not used with the affirmative verb unless something more than the ordinary force of assertion is required. The affirmative and negative verb therefore are thus declined:—

## AFFIRMATIVE.

I wish.

I wished.

Go.

If I go.

If I went.

## NEGATIVE.

I do not wish.

I did not wish.

Do not go.

If I do not go.

If I did not go.

Thus we see the affirmative side is clear of this auxiliary. Apart from emphasis, it is confined to the negative proposition, and to interrogations:—

Where did you go?

What do you think?

But the earlier usage still holds in provincial dialects, as in the following from the Dorset poems:—

'Where wide and slow  
The stream did flow,  
And flags did grow and lightly flee,  
Below the grey-leaved withy tree;  
Whilst clack clack clack from hour to hour  
Did go the mill by cloty Stour.'

How thoroughly this is a word of the modern language, and how recently it ascertained its own final place and function, may be seen from the following quotation, wherein Spenser, a contemporary of Shakspeare, yokes *did* with a verb in the preterite :—

‘Astond he stood, and up his heare did hove.’

*The Faery Queene*, i. 2. 31.

At present this auxiliary is not used to form tenses of the verb *to be*, but we find it so used in the Ballads and Romances. Thus in *Eger and Grime*:—

‘Gryme sayd, “how farr haue wee to that citee  
whereas that Ladyes dwelling doth bee?”’ Line 758.

“‘why Sir,” said shee, “but is it yee  
that in such great perill here did bee?”’ Line 788.

‘It was a heauenly Melodye  
for a Knight that did a louer bee.’ Line 926.

**587.** The verb *do* is thus an auxiliary which peculiarly belongs to English, though at its start it was a French-borrowed plume. But the great bulk of the auxiliaries of our language are of home origin and development, and they will be found to correspond to the verbal modes of expression which are used in German and the other dialects of the Gothic stock. I speak of such auxiliaries as *shall*, *will*, *may*, *can*, *let*, *might*, *could*, *would*, *should*. An example or two will suffice to indicate how greatly we are in a state of contrast with the Romanesque tongues on this feature.

| SPANISH.  | ITALIAN. | FRENCH.   |                          |
|-----------|----------|-----------|--------------------------|
| amaré     | amerò    | aimerai   | I shall or will love.    |
| amaríamos | ameremmo | aimerions | we should or would love. |
| amémos    | amiamo   | aimons    | let us love.             |



588. There is yet another feature in the symbolism surrounding the verb, in which the English use is in accordance with the Gothic languages, and at variance with the Romanesque. This is in regard to those adverbs which in the Romanesque languages have the habit of prefixing themselves inseparably to their verbs. The equivalents of these are not always, but for the most part, separate or at least separable in English and German and the Gothic languages generally. This will be readily understood by the help of a few examples of this contrast between French and English: They are taken from Randle Cotgrave, 1611:—

Abboyer, to barke or bay at.

Decourir, to run down.

Deprier, to pray instantly.

Descrier, to cry down.

Entrecouper, to cut between.

Parservir, to serve thoroughly.

Proteler, to shift off.

Pourvoir, to provide for.

Rebouillir, to boil once more.

Rebouier, to bowle againe.

One verbal structure which existed in Saxon, and was reinforced in the French period, has not rooted itself permanently, and that is the Reflexive. We find *endeavour ourselves* in the Common Prayer Book, but on the whole it may be said that the examples of this sort are now antiquarian curiosities.

Another verbal structure, which came to us through both sources, and which we inherited in all its fullness,

has also fallen into disuse, and that is the Impersonal verb:—

*me semed.*

‘... there was an excellent doctour of dyuynyte in the royaume of fraunce of the ordre of thospytal of Saynt Johns of Jherusalem whiche entended the same, and hath made a book of the chesse moralysed . whiche at suche tyme as I was resident at brudgys [Bruges] in the counte of Flaundres cam in to my handes / whiche whan I had redde and ouerseene / me semed ful neces-sayre for to be had in englishe.’—William Caxton, *The Game of the Chesse*, A.D. 1474; Preface.

*liketh you.*

‘... for this liketh you, O yee children of Israel.’—Amos iv. 5 (1611).

### *The Explicit Noun.*

**589.** If we turn now from the symbolism that surrounds the verb, to that which is attendant upon the noun, we shall see that the latter is most prominently drawn from the articles and the prepositions. These are the symbolic satellites of the noun. And there is perceivable a certain co-operation with one another in their action. When two substantives are united by a genitival relation, as ‘servus servorum,’ ‘hæleþa hleo,’ ‘man-kind,’ and you substitute an *of* for the genitival flexion or genitival relation of the one noun, you find yourself often obliged to give the other noun an article; thus, ‘a servant of servants,’ ‘heroes’ shelter’ avoiding both preposition and article,—or using them both, ‘the shelter of heroes,’ ‘the family of man.’ If we compare the Versions of 1535 and of 1611 in *Daniel* i. 2, the elder has ‘and there brought them into his gods treasury;’ but the younger has it ‘into the treasure-house of his god.’ The change of structure from flexional to symbolic has thus brought in two symbols to attend on the noun—namely, the preposition and the article.

590. There are in English two great formulas for the construction of substantival phrases, and there is perhaps no more convenient, as there certainly cannot be a more national medium of exhibiting these, than through the long and short titles of our Acts of Parliament.

According to one of these formulas, the words and phrases which constitute a substantival whole, are concatenated by means of symbols thus :—

‘An Act further to amend the Laws relating to the Representation of the People in England and Wales.’

‘An Act for the Abolition of Compulsory Church Rates.’

‘An Act to make further Amendments in the Laws for the Relief of the Poor in England and Wales.’

‘An Act for the Amendment of the Act of Uniformity.’

The other formula merely collocates the chief nounal words in juxtaposition, and that in a reversed order ; as—

‘The Representation of the People Act.’

‘The Compulsory Church Rate Abolition Act.’

‘The Poor Law Amendment Act.’

‘The Act of Uniformity Amendment Act.’

And so for all complex notions we have a short familiar way of naming them, as well as a stately formula of designation<sup>1</sup>.

Our speech has acquired this faculty and range of variation by its historical combination of the two great linguistic elements of Western civilization, the Roman and the Gothic. The long style of structure is that which we have learned

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<sup>1</sup> See 1 Cor. iii. 9 ; and compare the Contents.

from the French: the short and reversed style is our own native Saxon.

Between these two formulas, so widely divergent, there lies the whole region of Flexion, and the prepositions of the longer formula have come in as substitutes for case-endings.

As there is a triple variety in our syntax, so it is an hereditary and congenial usage to speak and write with that variation which the nature and growth of our speech has put within our power. And this variation has moreover its utility, as when in antithesis it removes the contrast from the ear, and leaves it only to the mind, thus purging the language of a certain sensual importunity; as may be seen by the following example, wherein the italics are happily placed for our purpose:—

‘God grant when men are at *their wits end*, they may be at the *beginning of their faith*, valiantly to hold out in the Truth.’—Thomas Fuller, *Abel Redivivus*; The Epistle to the Reader, 1651.

**591.** The substitution of the preposition instead of the case of the noun, has been extended also to the pronoun. Hence a variety of pronounal phrases, such as *few of us*, *one of you*, *all of them*; and cumulative phrases also, as *of my own*, *of yours*, *of theirs*, *from thence*.

*of itself.*

‘Warsaw is not of itself a strong fortress, but it closes the railway and defends the passage of the Vistula.’

And the conjunctions which are formed from the pronouns soon catch this phrasal habit.

*out of which to.*

‘But those wise and good men whose object it had been all along to save what they could of the wreck, out of which to construct another ark,’ &c.—Blunt, *History of the Reformation*, ch. ix.

This has been felt to be a Frenchism or a classicism, and the English humour has never thoroughly liked it. At best it is but book-English. It is one of the most salient of the features of Addison's style that he asserted the native idiom in this particular, as: 'This is the thing, which I spoke to you of.' This English reluctance to welcome 'of which,' 'to which,' 'from which,' as conjunctions, is to be noted as the point where our instincts lead us to resist the further progress of the French element. At this point there is, however, much vacillation and uncertainty: the English ear not being quite satisfied with either construction. The following is from one of Addison's papers in the *Spectator*, No. 449 :—

'This Morning I received from him the following Letter, which, after having rectified some little orthographical Mistakes, I shall make a Present of to the Publick.'

The contact of the symbols *of to* is not pleasing.

592. One of the prepositions has acquired for itself a very remarkable function, in attendance not on a noun, but on a verb; and yet it is a noun also; it is at the point of union between noun and verb, that is to say, the infinitive. Here the preposition *to* has made for itself a permanent place, just as *at* has in Danish, and *a* (Latin *ad*) in Wallachian.

| DANISH.   | ENGLISH. | WALLACHIAN. |
|-----------|----------|-------------|
| at bære   | to bear  | a purta     |
| at skrive | to write | a scribe    |

Thus we perceive that the prepositional form of the infinitive is not peculiar to English, as against other Gothic tongues; nor yet to the Gothic, as opposed to the Romance family of languages; but that it springs up indifferently

under various conditions, and therefore must be referred to some general tendency. What that tendency is I have already surmised in the chapter on the adverbs (453).

593. We have now reached the final stage of development of speech in its effort to overtake the several meanings of the mind and invest them each with an appropriate distinctness of form. It is as if we had followed with our eye the branchings of a growing tree till we came to the tips of last year's spray. Of the year's new growth in tender wood, only a small part will permanently endure. This infinitude of little shoots will forthwith enter into a competition, which will increase in severity with every season, and nature's pruning will lop out year by year the weakest, until at length a very few will have established for themselves a post of permanence.

The sprays of language are these phrasal forms which are produced by the combination of symbolic words. They are constantly springing up in particular classes of society, in particular localities or crafts or schools; and in the same sphere they mostly pass their existence until they are ousted by some phrase of newer device. Now and then it happens that one escapes beyond the limits of its class and becomes more generally known, but even then, in most cases it is only to enjoy a short career, and be soon forgotten. An instance of this occurred in the recent expression *to make it out*; which originated about thirty years ago in the aristocratic region, got enlarged so far as to be current among the whole of the educated classes, and then passed quietly into oblivion. A distinguished Queen's Counsel told me how he found himself one day seated at a dinner table where the company was mostly of higher rank than he had been used to, and that by way of opening conversation with the lady next him, he asked her the question of the hour, Whether she had

been to the Royal Academy? She had not; she had not been able *to make it out*. 'Make it out'! thought my friend to himself, 'What can that mean? This is one of their aristocratic phrases that they understand among themselves.' In the course of time it became more public, and was heard on all sides, and it meant the same as to make time for a thing. But it had no chance of permanence, because there was already a well-established phrase, 'to make it out' in the sense of clearing up a difficulty or uncertainty.

Let us take an example from the other end of the community. In Somersetshire the ordinary phrase 'to have to do a thing' is in frequent and varied use. The negative 'not to have to do' is common as a euphemism for saying that the thing is prohibited. The parson came suddenly upon some rustic children who were swinging where they had no right to be, and as he drove them off, one boy made himself the spokesman: 'Please, sir, we did n know as we had n had to swing here!'

### *Concluding Remarks on Syntax.*

**594.** There are two chief controlling influences in the formation of the sentence, namely Logic and Rhythm. Of rhythm we shall have to speak in the chapter on Prosody: logic associates itself with Syntax.

Logic as a mental faculty is not originaive and creative; it is only regulative and continuative. A stock of thought is presupposed, and the part of logic is to arrange this in an intelligent order. For the purposes of philology we may define logic as an intellectual consistency in syntax, a regularity of language which guides thought smoothly and agreeably.

The meaning may often be clear enough though the

language may be so inconsequent that we should pronounce it nonsense. In a certain Improvement Act of the session of 1872, the interpretation clause lays it down as a rule 'that the term "new building" means any building pulled or burnt down to or within ten feet from the surface of the adjoining ground.' The meaning is plain enough, that no building shall be accounted as new, of which more than ten feet was old. But it is illogical, it creates a jumble and discord of thought, across which the mind has to get at the sense.

Sometimes in language, as in music, such a discord may be entertaining:—

'Some girls were asked by one of our inspectors of schools, whether they knew what was the meaning of the word scandal. One little girl stepped vigorously forward, and throwing her hand up in that semaphore fashion by which children indicate the possession of knowledge, attracted the notice of the inspector. He desired her to answer the question, upon which she uttered these memorable words: "Nobody does nothing, and everybody goes on telling of it everywhere." . . . Listen to it again. "Nobody does nothing (regard the force of that double negative) and everybody goes on (note the continuity of slander) telling of it everywhere."—*Good Words*, August 1872; 'A Conversation of Certain Friends in Council.'

595. We have shewn abundant readiness to do justice to the claims of the logical sense. Our dismissal of the elder negative, and our rule that two negatives are equal to an affirmative, are an instance in which logical sense rather than speech-instinct has had the sway. In the latter part of last century we had reached a sort of culminating point in the matter of logical syntax, and since that time there has been a relaxation and some little disposition to admit structures, that are expressive or pleasing, though they cannot quite give a logical account of themselves. Nothing is plainer, for example, than this, that two or more subjects united by 'and' form plurality, and should logi-



cally. have a plural verb; and therefore the following is logically right:—

‘Mr. Jenkins’s house was about a mile from Mr. Benson’s: it was delightfully situated; there were a beautiful lawn and canal before it, and a charming garden behind;’—Mrs. Trimmer, *Fabulous Histories*, ch. x.

No one hardly would write so now-a-days: it offends from excess of logic.

Here is another instance in which the logic is too rigid:—

‘A very small number of similar reminiscences of my own is also added.’—Sir George Henry Rose, *Marchmont Papers*; Preface.

**596.** Nouns of multitude enjoy the privilege of construing either as singulars or as plurals: but if within the same sentence they take both constructions, there arises the sense of illogicality:—

‘Samaria for their sinnes, is captivated.’—*2 Kings* xvii.; Contents.

The logical quality of speech is contingent on a variety of attendant circumstances. What has been logical once is not logical always.

In Exodus iv. Contents, we read, ‘The people beleeueth them,’ where we should now say ‘The people believe them.’ There is here a double adjustment, first as concerns the grammatical number of this collective noun, and secondly as to that of the termination *-eth*, which was once a plural termination. Not however to analyse all this, it suffices for the present to observe that while the two forms of this sentence above given have been equally logical each in its day, the latter only seems logical now.

By universal assent the French is reputed the most logical of all languages. This is not due to any special sensitiveness which the nation has displayed upon this subject: on the contrary, they have followed the natural speech-instinct

with greater simplicity than we have, as is witnessed by the different conduct of the two nations in the matter of the double negative. Nor is there any language which is fuller of idioms defying logical analysis. But the meaning is transparent, and the mind follows the language not only without impediment, but also with the enjoyment of a perceptible concord between the structure and the sense.

## CHAPTER XI.

### OF COMPOUNDS.

**597.** IN a general way of speaking, compounds are merely morsels of syntax which from being often together have become adherent, and have grown into something between phrases and words. A mature language makes fresh compounds after the pattern established; but the origin of the pattern is to be sought in the habits, often the earlier habits, of the syntactical structure.

Accordingly some of our compounds do and others do not represent the present order of syntax. Since *income* was formed, we have changed the syntax of the verb, and we say *come in*; but the modern compound *break-water* is in harmony with present syntax.

Compounds vary extremely as regards laxity or compactness of fabric. When first made they are very lax, and hardly to be distinguished as compounds from words in syntax. Such loose compounds are daily made by little more than the trick of inserting hyphens. In the *Cornhill Magazine* a writer upon rhetoric designates a certain style of diction as the *allude-to-an-individual* style. In those languages

which have a ready faculty for 'compound-making, this sort of off-hand compound has always been one of the recognised means of being funny. Passing over this sort, which are hardly to be ranged as compounds at all, we have such loose examples as *forget-me-not*, and such compact examples as *mankind*, *nostril*, *boatswain*, which through long use are so well knit as to be more like simple words than compounds. The compound state, properly so called, is an intermediate condition between the phrase and the word; a transition which the phrase passes through in order to become gradually condensed into a simple word. We are of old familiar with the grammatical idea that phrases are made out of words, but here we recognise that the reverse of this is also true, and that words are made out of phrases.

**598.** The distinctive condition which marks that a compound has been formed, is the change of accent. The difference between 'black bird' and 'blackbird' is one of accent. Or, when it is stated of a horse that he is 'two years old,' each of these words has its own several tone; but make a trisyllable of it, and say a 'two-year-old,' and the sound is greatly altered. The second and third words lean enclitically upon the first, while the first has gathered up all the smartness of tone into itself, and goes off almost like the snap of a trigger. The written sign which is used to signify that a compound is intended, is the hyphen; which may therefore be regarded as being indirectly a note of accent.

This is the reason why the hyphen is so much more used in poetry than in prose. The poet is attending to his cadences, and therefore he appreciates the accentual value of the hyphen. Our prose (on the other hand) is sprinkled with compounds which are written as if they were in construction. There is no need to search for examples, they offer themselves on the page of the moment. On the page

that happens to be under my eye, I find two compounds, both without hyphens:—

*coast-line.*

‘Indeed these old coal layers call to mind our peat bogs. We find a layer of peat nearly everywhere on our coast line between high and low water mark.’

I think most people would read *coal layers* and *peat bogs* as compounds also; but on these there might be a difference of opinion. The same may be said of *millstone grit* in the next quotation; but there can be no doubt as to

*coal-producing.*

‘You know that if you heat a poker it expands; the heat making it longer. The earth is in the same state as a hot poker, and parts of it expand or contract as the heat within it ebbs and flows. I have here a section of the coal measures of Lancashire. Upon a thick base of millstone grit, of which most of our hills are composed, you have the coal producing rocks, which, instead of being horizontal as they were originally, have been tilted up.’—W. Boyd Dawkins, *On Coal*.

599. An incident which attends upon the act of compounding is this,—that the old grammatical habit of the final member is subjected to the grammatical idea of the new compound. Any part of speech will assume in compounding the substantive character, and will pluralise as such. Thus *forget-me-not*, plural *forget-me-nots*. I remember a quaker lady, who, with the grave and gentle dignity that formed part of her beautiful character, disapproved of chimney-ornaments, on the ground that they were *need-nots*. Moreover, a plural form, on entering into composition, takes a new character as a singular, and withal a new power of receiving a new plurality. Thus, singular *sixpence*, plural *sixpences*.

Inasmuch then as compounds are in their nature and origin nothing but fragments of structure in a state of cohesion, it follows that they will most naturally be classi-

fied according to the divisions of syntax. Although a precise classification may hardly be practicable, owing to the vast play of fancy, and the consequent inter-crossing of the kinds of compounds, yet we shall experience in following such a division some of that practical convenience which attends a method that is substantially true to nature. The relation between the members of a compound is expressed in one of three ways; either (1) by their relative position, as in the difference between *pathfield*, *racehorse*, and *fieldpath*, *horserace*; or (2) by an inflection of one of the parts, as in *subtle-cadenced*; or (3) by the intervention of a symbolic word, as in *man-of-war*, *bread-and-cheese*. The first and third are the methods in greatest vogue; the second is rather literary. Often it may be observed that the first and third are alternatives; thus in the north they say *breadloaf*, but in the south *loaf-of-bread*.

We will speak of these three as Compounds of the First Order, Compounds of the Second Order, and Compounds of the Third Order.

## I. COMPOUNDS OF THE FIRST ORDER.

**600.** The most prevalent means by which compounds are made is by mere juxtaposition. This is the case in many important languages besides English. In Hebrew, for example, Beer signifies a well, and Sheba signifies an oath; and when these two are put together, we have the name Beersheba, which means *the well of the oath*. In the true English analogue the positions of the parts would be reversed, and it would stand as Oath-well. In Welsh the order is the same as in Hebrew, and the reverse of the English order. Thus Llan is church, and Fair is an altered form of Mair, that is Mary, and the

Welsh express Mary-church in the reverse order, Llanfair. In all these instances the compound follows the order usual in the syntactical construction of each language.

Our English order of juxtaposition is the most widely adopted, and it may be regarded as the most natural. The famous collection of ancient Sanskrit hymns is called the Rig-Veda, and this title answers part for part to our 'Hymn book.'

The general principle of the compounds of the first order is this,—that two words are united, with the understanding that the first is adjectival or adverbial to the second; in other words, the second is principal and the first modificatory. The simplest examples are those which are made of an adjective and a substantive, as *blackbird*.

601. But by far the most characteristic are those which are made of two substantives, the first acting as an adjective. Such are the following :—

|             |                        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| air-balloon | nut-cracker            |
| boat-swain  | oak-apple              |
| cart-horse  | prize-ox               |
| dog-kennel  | quern-stone            |
| edge-tool   | rick-yard              |
| fish-wife   | ship-mate              |
| gift-horse  | time-piece             |
| hand-loom   | upas-tree              |
| ink-horn    | vine-yard              |
| king-cup    | water-hole (Australia) |
| lamp-oil    | yoke-fellow            |
| main-spring |                        |

This form of compound is homely, idiomatic, and familiar; and it is put aside for the compound of the third order when dignity is aimed at. But there is a cycle in these things, and now we see this compound recovering

some of its lost ground. In the following quotation, instead of 'music of the spheres,' we have *sphere-music*.

'In any point of Space, in any section of Time, let there be a living Man; and there is an Infinitude above him and beneath him, and an Eternity encompasses him on this hand and on that; and tones of Sphere-music, and tidings from loftier worlds, will flit round him, if he can but listen, and visit him with holy influences, even in the thickest press of trivialities, or the din of busiest life.'—Thomas Carlyle, *State of German Literature*, ad fin.

**602.** This is the sort of compound for which the German language is proverbial<sup>1</sup>. The flat syntax has disappeared from that language, and it has gone to swell the numbers of their flat compounds. Examples are such as *Hand=schuh* (hand-shoe), glove; *Finger=hut* (finger-hat), thimble; *Erde=funde* (earth-knowledge), geography; *Sprache=lehre*, speech-lore.

There is so close an affinity between the German and English compounds of the first order, that the one will occasionally supply a comment on the other.

*Handywork* affords an example of this. As we find it printed, it has the appearance of our adjective *handy* combined with a substantive *work*. But the German *Handwerk* suggests a truer etymology. It consists, in fact, of two substantives, namely *hand* and *geweorc*, or (mediævally) *ywork*; so that it would be more correctly written thus *hand-ywork*. But if this looks too archaic, it should be spelt *handiwork*. The Saxon original is found in *Deuteronomy* iv. 28:—

|                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>'And ge þeowiap fremdum godum,<br/>manna hand geweorc, treowene and<br/>stænene, þa ne geseoþ, ne ne gehiraþ,<br/>ne hig ne etaþ, ne hig ne drincaþ.'</p> | <p>And ye (shall) serve foreign gods,<br/>men's handiwork, tree-en and stonen,<br/>that see not, nor hear; and they eat<br/>not, and drink not.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

<sup>1</sup> The following is from a newspaper:—'GERMAN WORD BUILDING.—The German name for a tram car is "Pferdstrasseneisenbahnwagen." It looks formidable, but so would the English equivalent if written in one word, in the German style, thus:—"Horse-road-railway-carriage."



. 603. Other Saxon compounds there are of the same mould, but none that have so nearly preserved their original form as *handiwork* has. One of these was *handgewrit*, which has been turned into *handwriting*. There is no hyphen in Saxon manuscripts, but words that have an accentual attraction were often written somewhat nearer to one another<sup>1</sup>. Some words were thus divided in two, which have coalesced since.

|               |              |                   |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| A.D. 495. (A) | aldor men    | aldermen          |
| 514.          | West Seaxe   | West-Saxons       |
| 633.          | biscep setl  | bishop-seat = Sec |
| 660.          | biscep dom   | bishopric         |
| 676.          | Cent lond    | Kent-land         |
| 704.          | munuc had    | monk-hood         |
| 738.          | Eofor wic    | York              |
| 755.          | god sunu     | godson            |
| 773.          | setl gong    | setting (of sun)  |
| 832.          | Sceap ige    | Sheppey           |
| 833.          | wæl stow     | battle-ground     |
| 851.          | healf hund   | half-hundred      |
| 853.          | biscep sunu  | god-son           |
|               | monig mon    | many-a-man        |
| 855.          | ham weard    | homeward          |
| 866.          | winter setl  | winter-quarters   |
| 871.          | wæl sliht    | battle-slaughter  |
| 878.          | mor faesten  | moor-fastness     |
| 882.          | scip hlæstas | ship-loads        |
|               | folc gefeoht | folk-fight        |
| 891.          | boc læden    | book-Latin        |
| 894.          | here hyð     | army-stuff        |
| 896.          | stal wyrð    | stalworth         |
| 933.          | land here    | land-army         |
|               | scip here    | ship-army         |
| 937.          | beah gifa    | badge-giver.      |

<sup>1</sup> In the text of my *Saxon Chronicles* this is represented by a half-distance, where the originals justify it.

604. The following have an adjective (or participle) in the second place, and the same relation holds good between the parts; for the first part, whatever its habit as a part of speech, is still the specific of the two:—

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| blood-thirsty           | heart-whole    |
| fancy-free (Shakspeare) | life-long      |
| full-blown              | rathe-ripe     |
| foot-sore               | thunder-struck |
| heart-sick *            | weather-wise † |
| heart-weary             |                |

*spectacle-bestrid.*

‘Misled by custom, strain celestial themes  
Through the pressed nostril, spectacle-bestrid.’

William Cowper, *The Timepiece*.

This is expressed by an accentual elevation, whereby the specific word is raised into a sharp prominence, while the generic word is let down to a low tone. There are some exceptions, as in the word *mankind*; but the general rule is that the accent strikes the first or specific part of the compound. This is not the place to speak of accents, any further than just to notice that the accent indicates where is the stress of thought. This will be found to explain the occasional exception.

605. Out of composition has grown, and by insensible modifications developed itself, that phenomenon so interesting to the philologist, and so frequent in his discourse, namely, FLEXION. The origin of flexion appertains to this eldest group of compounds; but for the action and behaviour of flexion when once established, we may go to the second or middle order of compounds; and indeed, we may speak more generally, and say:—*Flexion occupies the middle zone of the whole sphere of human language as it is historically known to us.*

A slight indication of the process is all that can be attempted in this place.

The chief attention being usually fixed on the fore-part of the compound, the after-part is left free to undergo alteration. This has been attended with remarkable consequences, in certain instances, where the termination was already of a widely generic character. The slighting of the tone and the generalisation of the sense, go on together and favour one another. At length the termination reaches a symbolic value, and we obtain those forms in which the after-part is merely an abstract or collective sign to the fore-part; as *childhood*, *friendship*, *happiness*, *kingdom*, *kindred*, *warfare*, *wedlock*.

Other cases there are in which the second part passes into a sort of adjectival or adverbial termination; as *graceful*, *careless*, *froward*, *contrariwise*.

So far we can still regard these as a sort of compounds. But the symbolising process goes on, and with it the waning of the form of the second part, until we are landed in flexion: thus from *good-like* we at length get *goodly*.

A very large majority of the words of a mature language, if we could analyse them correctly, would be found to dissolve into phrases. So that we may reverse the ordinary grammatical view whereby words are regarded as the material of sentences; and we should be philologically justified in this seeming paradox:—*The Sentence is the raw material of the Word*.

### *Of Particle-Composition.*

**606.** The class of Compounds to which this name is given belongs to the First Order, and they are the relics of a symphytism between verbs and their prepositive adverbs.

Where the relation is other than adverbial, it is not a case of Particle-Composition: as in *forehead*, where the first part is adjectival; or in *afternoon*, *because*, *contraband*, *post-obit*, where it is a preposition.

**606 a.** First, the Saxon group, once large, now much reduced in numbers.

**after-**:—*aftermath*, *afterward*.

**and-, an-**, as *answer* (A.S. *andsware*), *andiron*; corrupted **hand-**, as *handloom* (A.S. *andloma*), *handicap*, *handiron*.

**be-, by-**:—*become*, *behalf*, *behest*, *behoof*, *belief*, *belong*; *by-word*, *by-lane*, *by-path*, *by-stander*, *by-way*, *by-work*.

**for-, fore-**:—*forbid*, *forget*, *forgive*, *forego*, *forlorn*, *fore-right*, *foreshorten*, *forward*.

*fore-right*.

‘If well thou hast begun, go on fore-right.’

Robert Herrick.

**gain-**:—*gainsay*. Compare *gain-giving* in Hamlet v. 2. 202.

**ge-**. A participial and generalising prefix, which once was rife in our language, and which still flourishes with a fine effect in German. With us it has dwindled into a poetical curiosity, and it has taken the form of *y-* or other forms still less recognisable.

*ychain’d*.

Yet first to those ychain’d in sleep,  
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep.’

John Milton, *On the Morning of Christ’s Nativity*, xvi.

*yclept*.

‘But come thou Goddess fair and free,  
In Heaven ycleap’d Euphrosyne.’ Id. *L’Allegro*.

*ypointing.*

'What needs my Shakespear for his honour'd Bones,  
The labour of an age in piled Stones,  
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid,  
Under a Star-ypointing Pyramid?'

John Milton, *On Shakespear*, 1630.

**in-**:—*income, inland, inmate, insight, instep, inward.*

**mis-**. A Gothic prefix of wide area, found in a large number of Saxon compounds; now greatly reduced, but with a few compensations:—*miscarry, misgiving, mislike, mismanagement, mistake*. Carried by the Franks into Gaul, it lives in modern French, and by that road we have received *misadventure, mischief, misnomer*, and the imperfectly naturalised *mésalliance*.

**of-, off-**:—*offal, offset, offshoot, offscouring, offspring.*

**out-**:—*outdo, outgoing, outlaw, output* ('a great output of coal'), *outrun, outset, outshine, outstrip, outwork, outward.*

**over-**:—*overbearing, overcoat, overcome, overdrive, overlook, overmuch, overthwart, overturn, overwork.*

**thorough-**:—*thoroughfare, thoroughgoing.*

**to-**:—*toward, to-brake*, Judges ix. 53. In Saxon there was a good list of these.

**un-**:—*unlawful, unlikely, unwilling*. This is one of the few Saxon prefixes that have entered freely into composition with Roman words, as *unhesitating, unjust, unmitigated, unscrupulous*.

**under-**:—*undergo, underhand, understand, undertake.*

**up-**:—*upland, uplong, upon, upright, upset, upward.*

**well-**:—*well-beloved, welcome, well-wisher.*

**with-**:—*withdraw, withhold, withstand.*

**606 b.** In the French list the most important is that which comes first in alphabetical order. The particle *a* as a prefix may in some cases be an altered *of*, as in *adown*, which may

be explained from the 'Saxon of *dúne*; or an altered *on*, as *about* from Saxon *onbutan*, *asleep* from Saxon *on slæpe*. But in the bulk this prefix is to be identified with the French preposition *à*, Latin *ad*: and even in the alterations from the Saxon, this French preposition has been influential<sup>1</sup>: *abed*, *afar*, *afield*, *afoot*, *ajar*, *akin*, *along*, *aloud*, *aright*, *astir*, *athwart*, *away*.

*amain.*

‘And with his troupes doth march amaine to London.’

3 *Henry VI*, iv. 8. 4.

In early times the *a* was often written as a separate preposition, to the confusion of modern annotators:—

*a right.*

‘There-fore he was a prikasure a right.’

Chaucer, *Prologue*, 189; Lansdowne MS.

*a laughter.*

‘And therewithal a laughter out he brast.’

*The Court of Love*, ad finem.

*a forlorn.*

‘And forc’d to live in Scotland a Forlorne.’

Shakspeare, 3 *Henry VI*, iii. 3. 26.

In this passage we are furnished with the correction ‘all forlorn.’ Other instances are *a high*, *Richard III*, iv. 4. 86 (where Pope ‘on high’); *a bed*, *Henry V*, iv. 3. 64. This is a favourite strain of words in the seafaring life, as *aback*, *abaft*, *aboard*, *afloat*, *aground*, *ahead*, *aloft*, *alongside*, *aloof*, *ashore*, *astern*.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Dasent, *Jest and Earnest*, vol. ii. would refer this *a-* to the Icelandic *á*; and in some instances, as in the case of *alone*, it is not easy to resist the force of his argument.

*alow, aloft.*

'Stunsails alow and aloft! said he,  
As soon as the foe he saw.'

John Harrison, *Three Ballads.*

**counter-** (against):—*counteract, counterfeit, countermove.*  
Altered form—*country-dance*, French *contre-danse*.

**en-** and **em-**:—*embalm, enact, encamp, endeavour, enfranchise, engender, enjoy, enlighten, enlist, enquire, ensample, ensue, enthrall, entice, entire.*

**pur-** (French *pour*):—*purchase, purlieu, purloin, purport, pursue, pursuing, purtenance, purvey.*

**606 c.** The Latin composites of this class have largely displaced the Saxon ones, and absorbed those of French deriv. An F attached to a word signifies that it is an example of this. In some instances the particles have been so thoroughly domesticated, that they have formed new home-made combinations.

**a-, ab-, or abs-** (from):—*avert, abrogate, abstain.*

**ad-** (to):—*adapt, adequate, adherent, admit, advert.*

**ante-** and **anti-** (before):—*antecedent, antechapel, antediluvian, ante-room, anticipate.*

**circum-** (around):—*circumference, circumlocution, circumnavigate, circumspect, circumstance (F).*

**con-** and **co-** (with):—*consonant, coeval, company (F), contemporary.*

**contra-** and **contro-** (against):—*contradict, controversy.*

**de-** (from):—*deject, descend, despair (F).* Home-made *deodorize.*

**dis-** has the notion of undoing, scattering hither and thither; sometimes of mere separation or subtraction:—*disadvantage (F), discount (F), discredit, disdain (F), dissent,*

*disturb*. This prefix has sometimes displaced the Saxon *mis-*, as in *dislike* for *mislike*. Spenser reduces this *dis-* to *s-* by an Italian imitation, and hence such forms as *sdeigned* (*Faery Queene*, iii. i. 40, 55), *spight*.

**e-** or **ex-** (from, out of):—*eject*, *elude*, *expect*. Prefixed to titles it designates persons who have recently quitted office, as *Ex-Chancellor*, *Ex-Mayor*.

**in-** or **im-** (in):—*inject*, *inoculate*, *insert*, *inspect*, *intrude*; *imbue*, *impoverish*, *improve*.

**ob-** or **op-** (against, facing you):—*object*, *obloquy*, *oppose*, *obstacle*, *obverse*.

**per-** (through):—*perceive* (F), *perquisite*, *permanent*.

**post-** (after):—*postpone*, *postscript*.

**præ-**, only in its French form **pre-** (before, beforehand, forward):—*precede*, *predestinate*, *prefer*, *prejudice*, *premature*.

**pro-** (forward, for):—*promontory*, *pronounce*, *proportion*, *protest*.

**re-** and **red-** begins in the idea of reverse or reciprocal action, but it has acquired a signification so vague that explanation is hopeless, and the shades of its meaning are now so familiar to us that it speaks for itself. And indeed it has so completely established itself in English, as to have extinguished almost every other means of expressing the same notion. It is a fine example of the versatility of these highly symbolised ingredients and of the hold which they may get on the aggregate mind:—*rebel*, *rebut* (F), *receive* (F), *reedify*, *refer*, *regard* (F), *red-integrate*, *reject*, *rejoinder* (F), *relate*, *remark* (F), *renown* (F), *repent* (F), *request* (F), *resemble* (F), *return* (F), *reunion* (F), *revisit*, *revenge* (F), *review* (F), *revolve*, *redundant*, *reward* (F). Home-made *react*, *reagent*, *recall*, *re-elect*, *re-invest*.

**sub-** (under):—*subaqueous*, *subdivide*, *subject*, *subordinate*. Home-made, *subcommittee*, *subway*.



**606 d.** The Greek examples are largely concerned with literary and scientific terminology, and are for the most part common to the European languages.

**anti-** (opposite):—*anticlinal* (Geology), *antidote*, *antipathy*, *antipodes*, *antithesis*, *antitype*.

**apo-** (from), *apocalypse*, *apocrypha*, *apogee* (Astronomy), *apology*, *apostrophe*.

**en-** (in):—*enthusiasm*, *enthymeme* (Logic), *entomology*.

**epi-** (in addition to):—*epicycle* (Astronomy), *epidemic*, *epidermis* (Anatomy), *epigram*, *epilogue*, *epitaph*, *epitome*.

**para-** (beside, against):—*paradox*, *paraphrase*, *parasite*, *parasol*.

**peri-** (around):—*periphery*, *periphrasis*, *perigee* (Astronomy), *perihelion* (Astronomy).

**pro-** (before):—*programme* (F), *prolegomena*, *prologue*, *prophecy*.

**syn-** and **sym-** (with):—*synclinal* (Geology), *sympathy*, *syntax*, and by assimilation of *n* to *l*, *syllogism*.

## II. COMPOUNDS OF THE SECOND ORDER.

**607.** Here we make two groups. The first of compounds containing traces of flexion, as *beadsman*, *craftsman*, *daysman*, *draftsman*, *guardsman*, *headsman*, *helmsman*, *herdsman*, *landsman*, *marksman*, *pointsman*, *seedsman*, *spokesman*, *sportsman*, *tradesman*. In Saxon this was syntactic, as, 'se scyres man Leofric,' the shires man Leofric, Cod. Dipl. 929.

The second group consists of those in which the connection of the parts of the compound is indicated by flexion. Many compounds have flexion without belonging to this group, as *far-seeing*. It is when the inflection is applied in such a manner as to belong only to the combination

and not to either part by itself, that we have a compound which is distinctly flexional. In the above example, *seeing* is equally an inflected word whether it be in or out of the compound, and the *-ing* has no more special relation to the compound than the *-ful* has in the compound *all-powerful*. But if we take *long-legged*, this is a flexional compound. It is not a combination of *long* and *legged*, but rather of *long* and *leg* or *legs*, which are clamped together into one formation by the participial inflection.

Such are the following, of which the less common are marked with the initials of Milton or Tennyson:—

|                    |                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| arrow-wounded (T)  | meek-eyed (M)           |
| broad-shouldered   | neat-handed (M)         |
| cross-barred (M)   | open-hearted            |
| deep-throated (M)  | pure-eyed (M)           |
| eagle-eyed (M)     | royal-towered (M)       |
| far-fetched        | self-involved (T)       |
| golden-shafted (T) | thick-leaved (T)        |
| high-toned         | vermilion-tinctured (M) |
| icy-pearled (M)    | white-handed (M)        |
| large-moulded (T)  | yellow-ringleted (T).   |

**608.** This class of compounds is seen in its highest perfection in the Greek language, and the authors who have used this form of speech with the greatest effect and in the most opposite ways are Æschylus and Aristophanes. What was a trumpet to the former was employed as a bauble by the latter. Our modern poets are great performers upon this instrument. Keats handled it very effectively. In his *Endymion* we read of ‘yellow-girted bees’; also

*subtle-cadenced.*

‘Twas a lay

More subtle-cadenced, more forest wild,  
Than Dryope’s lone lulling of her child.’

*lidless-eyed*

'Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed train  
Of planets all were in the blue again.'

Also Mr. Robert Browning may well be quoted to illustrate this fondness:—

*billowy-bosomed.*

'Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
All billowy-bosomed, overbowed  
By many benedictions.'

*fawn-skin-dappled.*

'That fawn-skin-dappled hair of hers.'

Others by the same poet are *honey-coloured*, *fruit-shaped*, *fairy-cupped*, *elf-needled*.

609. In such instances the inflection reacts on the whole compound with a consolidating force. Several words may thus be strung together. When the last member of a linked composite has an inflection, it seems to run back pervadingly through the others, stringing the whole together with a thread of coherence. We do not use this power so much as the Germans do. Where we read 'O thou of little faith,' in Matthew xiv. 31, Luther has *O du Kleingläubiger*. Richard Rothe said of his student life at Heidelberg, that it was ein poetisch-religiös-wissenschaftliches Idyll.

In the following quotation, though it is not so printed, yet the word *old* is part of the compound and partner in the services of the termination:

*old friend-ish-ness.*

'The author having settled within himself the most direct mode of securing the ear of his readers, throws himself upon their favour with an air of trustfulness and old friend-ish-ness, which cannot fail to secure him welcome and audience.'—*Quarterly Review*, vol. cxxviii. p. 545.

Here also seem to belong those instances in which the last member is a present participle, governing the former members of the compound :

‘As a tool-and-weapon-using being, man stands alone.’—E. T. Stevens, *Flint Chips*, Preface.

**610.** The Compounds of the First and Second Orders are for the most part the offspring of an early and inexplicit Syntax. They are the natural instruments for saying a great deal in brief compass, and with all the entailed consequences of inexplicitness. Among these consequences may be reckoned advantages as well as disadvantages. It is sometimes a disadvantage that the meaning is clouded, but then this turns to advantage in certain aspects, as when illusion is sought by the poet. Thus,

‘—— sea-path sunset-paved;’——

Aubrey de Vere, *Legends of Saint Patrick*, 1872 ; p. 48.

As an example of the uncertainty attending on compounds we may cite the famous Greek compound in Luke vi. 1, which literally rendered in English is ‘second-first’. Our version gives it ‘second sabbath after the first’—but this is only one of the possible solutions, and one that has not been universally preferred.

The logical faculty loves an explicit syntax, but the imagination has an affection for compounds, and especially for those of the first and second order. That logical language, the French, is stronger in syntax than in compounds, as it is also more excellent in prose than in poetry.

## III. COMPOUNDS OF THE THIRD ORDER.

**611.** Here belong all those compounds which are formed by an accentual union of phrases wherein the syntactical connection is entirely or mainly symbolic. There was a mediæval English expression for vain regret, which was made up of the words 'had I wist,' that is to say, 'Oh, if I had only known what the consequence would be.' It was variously written, and the variations depend on the degree of accentual intensification:—

*hadde-y-wiste.*

'And kepe þe well from hadde-y-wiste.'

*Babees Book*, p. 15, ed. Furnivall, Early English Text Society.

*hady-wyst.*

'When dede is doun hit ys to lat;

be ware of hady-wyst.'

The chief symbol which threads together these compounds is the preposition 'of,' as *coat-of-arms*, *will-o'-the-wisp*, *cat-o'-nine-tails*, *man-of-war*, *light-o'-love*, *ticket-of-leave*.

The distinction between compounds and constructs is a delicate one, so much so that two persons of like birth and education may be found to differ upon it. When however we see the *of* abraded to *o'*, or when we hear it in speech, as we often hear *man-o'-war*, then there is no doubt of the compound state of that expression.

**612.** This class of compounds is essentially French, and it is from our neighbours that we have caught the art of making them. Thus, we say after them:—

mot-d'ordre  
point-d'honneur

word-of-command  
point-of-honour.

But the instances in which we make use of it are far less numerous than those in which we keep to our natural compound, that of the first order. It is only necessary to offer a few examples by which it will appear how very far we are from overtaking the French in the use of their compound:—

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| chef-d'œuvre        | master-piece   |
| maison-de-campagne  | country-house  |
| chemin-de-fer       | rail-road      |
| bonnet-de-nuit      | night-cap      |
| tête-de-pavot       | † poppy-head   |
| culottes-de-peluche | plush-breeches |
| Bureau-de-Poste     | Post-Office.   |

And if we are slow to adopt their compounds with *de*, still less do we concern ourselves to imitate those which they so readily make with other prepositions; as—

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| arc-en-ciel    | rain-bow    |
| verre à vin    | wine-glass  |
| manche à balai | broom-stick |

So strong is our preference for our own old hereditary compound, that even where we substantially adopt a French compound, we alter it to the world-old form, as in the case of *coup-de-Bourse*, which in the following newspaper-cutting is turned into

### *Exchange-stroke.*

‘ Secretary Boutwell was in New York almost on the eve of the outbreak. He was aware, as indeed the whole city was, that a conspiracy was brewing—that what we might call an “Exchange stroke” was contemplated.’

The Americans outstrip us in converting these French compounds of the Third Order into English compounds of

the First Order. Thus we say *point of view*, after the French *point de vue*; but in American literature we meet with

*view-point*.

'The inmates of the Eureka House, from a social view-point, were not attractive.'—Bret Harte, *A Lonely Ride*.

613. The transition from the construct to the compound state is a slight and delicate thing, but it takes time to accomplish. The symbolic syntax has produced few as yet; the flexional syntax has produced far more, for the compounds of the second order have been greatly fostered by the study of Greek. But the great shoal of English compounds is derived from the eldest form of syntax, and they have their roots in a time immeasurably old. They claim kindred with Red-Indian compounds like *Tso-mec-cos-tee* and *Tso-me-cos-te-won-dee* and *Pah-puk-keéna* and *Pah-Puk-Keéwis* and other such, of which the ready and popular repertory is the *Song of Hiawatha*.

## CHAPTER XII.

### OF PROSODY, OR THE MUSICAL ELEMENT IN SPEECH.

‘ There is, in souls, a sympathy with sounds ;’—

William Cowper, *The Task*, vi. 1. •

614. THE first of these chapters was on the Alphabet, out of which, by a multiplicity of combinations, a conventional garb has been devised for the visible representation of language. By the artifice of literature, speech is presented to the eye as an object of sight. Partly in consequence of the pains which we are at to acquire literary culture ; partly also, perhaps, in consequence of the greater permanency of the visual impressions upon the mind,—certain it is, that the cultivated modern is apt to think of language rather as a written than as a spoken thing. And this, although he still makes far greater use of it by the oral than by the literary process. It is, however, quite plain that writing is but an external and necessarily imperfect vesture, while the true and natural and real form of language is that which is made of sound, and addressed to the ear.



Human speech consists of two essential elements, and these are Voice and Meaning. I say 'meaning' rather than 'thought,' because it seems a more comprehensive term, including the whole sphere of cognisance, from its innermost and least explored centre to its outermost frontiers in physical sensation.

Voice will, moreover, be found to consist of two parts, by a distinction worthy to be observed. For, in the first place, there is the voice which is the necessary vehicle of the meaning; and, in the second place, there is the voice which forms a harmonious accompaniment to the meaning. It is the former of these which is represented in literature; for the latter, literature is almost silent. Here the mechanical arts of writing and printing can do but little.

'One may put her words down, and remember them, but how describe her sweet tones, sweeter than musick?'—W. M. Thackeray, *Edmond*, Bk. ii. ch. xv.

**615.** Here then we must distinguish between the necessary and the noble sound, between Articulation and Modulation.

Poetry, which is the highest form of literature, makes great efforts to express, or at least to intimate to the mind, this finest part of the voicing of language. All the peculiar characteristics of poetry, such as verse, metre, rhyme, alliteration, assonance, are directed towards this end.

In prose this is more faintly and remotely indicated by such means as punctuation and italics and parentheses. Yet the distinction here drawn applies to prose as well as to poetry. It is perfectly well known, and generally recognised. It lies at the base of the demand for 'good reading.' A man may articulate every word, pronounce faultlessly, read fluently, and observe the punctuation, and yet be far from a good reader. So much of voice as is the vehicle

of sense is given, but the harmony is wanting, and there is no pleasure in listening to him. It is felt that, besides the sound which conveys the sense of the words, there is a further and a different kind of sound due as an illustrative accompaniment, and it is the rendering of this which crowns the performance of the good reader, as it is the perception of this which constitutes the appreciative listener.

Or again. Consider the sound of a passionless *Oh* as it might be uttered by a schoolboy in a compulsory reading lesson, and then consider the infinite shades of meaning of which this interjection is capable under the emotional vibrations of the voice, and we must acknowledge that the distinction between these two elements of vocal sound is of a character likely to be attended with philological consequences.

Of sound as the necessary vehicle of speech, and as the passive material of those phenomena which our science is concerned to investigate, we have already treated in the first and second chapters. But of sound as bearing an accordant, concentive, illustrative part, as being an outer harmony and counter-tenor to the strains of the inner meaning; of sound as an illustrative, a formative, and almost a creative power in the region of language, we must endeavour to render some account in this concluding chapter.

The distinction here urged is akin to that which is mechanically effected by the musical instrument maker. A musical note on an instrument is a noble sound, from which another sort of sound, namely that which we call *noise*, has been eliminated. All mechanical collision produces sound, and that natural sound is ordinarily of a complex kind, being in fact a noise with which a musical

note is confusedly blended. It is the work of art to contrive mechanical means whereby these two things may be parted, so that the musical notes which give pleasure may be placed at the command of men. What the musical instrument maker does physically, we may do mentally. We may separate in our minds between the mere brute sound necessary to speech, and that musical tone which more or less blends with it according to the temper and quality of the voice and its companion mind. The latter is a sovereign agency in the illustration and formation and development of language, and this is the SOUND of which the present chapter treats.

## I. OF SOUND AS AN ILLUSTRATIVE AGENCY.

**616.** The modulatory accompaniment of speech is not unworthy of comparison with music, although it is far more restricted in the range of its elevations and depressions. If its ups and downs are altogether on a smaller scale, if its motions are more subdued and less brilliant, yet, on the other hand, it has an advantage in the extent of its province. Music is the exponent of emotion only; it cannot be said to have any share in the expression or illustration of thought intellectual. Now speech-tones are in force over the whole area of human cognisance and feeling; they are coincident with the whole extent of meaning. They are expressly the illustration of Meaning.

As music is made of two elements, time and tune, so also is the modulation of speech. Time is expressed in quantity; and tune, or rather tone (which is the rudiment of tune), is embodied in accent. Our grammatical systems now take

little heed of quantity, except as a poetical regulator in classical literature. The poetry of the classics was measured by quantity; that of the moderns is measured by accent. The period at which quantity was consciously and studiously observed as an element of ordinary speech must have been very remote. Perhaps we may even venture speculatively to regard quantity as the speech-note of that primitive period before the rise of flexion, when language was (as it still is in some respectable nations) syllabic or agglutinative. We know from a thousand experiences how conservative poetry is, and we may reasonably imagine that the quantitative measure of Greek poetry had descended with a continuous stream of song from high antiquity. With the decay of the Roman empire it ceased to be a regulative principle even in poetry, and from that time accent has been foremost, as it had previously been in the background. We must not suppose the principle of quantity to be extinct; but it is no longer formulated; it is absorbed into that general swelling and flowing movement of language which is known under the somewhat vague name of rhythm.

**617.** Leaving quantity then, we proceed to consider the illustrative value of accent.

In the first place, accent appears as the ally and colleague of sense in the structure of words. In the first order of compounds we have to do with words like the following:—*ash-house, bake-house, brew-house, wood-house*. In these words the accent is on the predicate. That is to say, the stress of sound falls on that member of the word which bears the burden of the meaning. That which is asserted in those words is not *house*, but *ash, bake, brew, wood*. *House* is the subject or thing spoken of, and that which is asserted concerning it is contained in the word prefixed.

And this word or syllable is signalised, as with a flag, by having the accent upon it.

There is a difference between *good man* and *goodman*. The difference in the sense ought to be rendered by a distinction in the sound. *Good man* is a spondee: *goodman* is a trochee. The latter means 'a man, not who is *good* (adjective), but a man who is master of *the good* (substantive), i.e. of the household or property. Randle Cotgrave (1611), under the word 'Maistre,' says, towards the close of his definition—

*'Also, a title of honour (such as it is) belonging to all artificers, and tradesmen; whence Maistre Pierre, Maistre Jehan, &c.; which we give not so generally but qualifie the meaner sort of them (especially in countrey townes) with the title of Goodman (too good for many).'*

This illustration is useful for the English reader towards the understanding of Matthew xx. 11—

'And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house;'

which in the Geneva Bible of 1560 is thus rendered:—

'And when they had received it, they murmured against the master of the house.'

It is not always that we hear this word properly pronounced in church; and our Bibles, from 1611 down nearly to our own time, appear to have printed it in two words. But in the modern prints of the last thirty years this has been set right, and it may be hoped that the true vocal rendering will also be restored by and by.

The fact is, the early printers did not attend to these minutiae. As a rule they left such matters to the intelligence of the reader. In the First Folio of Shakspeare, *Love's*

*Labour's Lost*, i. 1. 289, it is printed, 'Ile lay my head to any good man's hat,' where, plainly, the meaning is 'goodman's hat,' as suggested in the Cambridge edition. And it is astonishing to find that such a critic as Capell should have proposed to correct as follows:—'I'll lay my head to any man's good hat,' prosaically deeming that for the purpose of the wager the goodness of the hat was of more importance than that of its wearer.

Just in the same manner *chapman* has the accent on the first syllable. The meaning of this word is a man engaged in *chaffare*, or merchandise. It is of the same family of words as *Cheapside*, which means *market-side*. It occurs in another form in *Chippenham*, *Chipping Norton*, *Chipping Ongar*, and *Copenhagen*. It is still the standard word in German for a merchant, *Kaufmann*. But when the French word had occupied the foremost place in English, the native word *chapman* fell into homelier use. This may be seen in the following quotation, which exhibits also the accentuation of the word on its first or determining syllable:—

'Beauty is bought by iudgement of the eye,  
Not uttred by base sale of chapmens tongues.'

*Loves Labours Lost*, ii. 1. 15.

618. Considering the relation of thought which exists between the two parts of a compound, it is plain that there is a harmony between the thought and the sound, when the first or specific part of the compound is distinguished in the accentuation. We have hitherto noticed only the instance of a compound consisting of two monosyllabic words, as *goodman*, *blackbird*. But where the first element of the compound has more than one syllable, there we find a secondary accent rests upon the after, or generic part; or,

if it cannot be said to have an accent, it recovers its full tone, as *water-course*.

Sometimes we fall in with a triple compound, with its three storeys or stages of accentuation forming a little cascade of gradations, as Spenser's *holy-water-sprinkle* in the following lines :—

'She always smyld, and in her hand did hold  
An holy-water-sprinkle, dipt in deowe,  
With which she sprinkled favours manifold.'

The habit of putting the specific or predicative part of a compound first, and the habit which leads us to throw our accents back on the former part of a long word, are plainly to be regarded as an example of harmonious action between the intelligence and the sentiency of the mind.

619. Even when the reasons arising from the structure of a word are no longer present, there is a tendency to pursue the track which habit has created, and to throw the accent back. Many a word of French origin has thrown its accent back according to this English principle of accentuation.

The French word *revenue* is a monument of this action. Two pronunciations of this word are recognised, namely *revénue* in the French manner, and *révenue* in the English manner. The latter is now almost universal, but the former is not extinct. In the following quotation from Shakspeare we may trace both of these pronunciations, for while the word is spelt as if for the French pronunciation, the metre requires the English accentuation.

'Towards our assistance, we do seize to us  
The plate, coine, reuennues, and moueables,  
Whereof our Uncle Gaunt did stand possest.'

*Richard II.*, ii. 1. 161.

Many a word has had its accent moved a syllable further back within the period of the last generation. The protest

of the poet Rogers has often been quoted,—‘*Cóntemplate*,’ said he, ‘is bad enough, but *bálcony* makes me sick.’ Now-a-days *cóntemplate* is the usual pronunciation. It was already so accented by Wordsworth.

‘The good and evil are our own: and we  
Are that which we would contemplate from far.’  
*The Excursion*, Bk. V.

The elder pronunciation is indeed still used in poetry, as

‘When I contemplate all ‘alone.’ *In Memoriam*, lxxxii.  
‘Contemplating her own unworthiness.’ *Enid* (1859), p. 29.

The pronunciation of *bálcony*, which seemed such an abomination to Rogers, is now the only pronunciation that is extant. The modern reader of *John Gilpin*, if he reads with his ear as well as his eye, is absolutely taken aback when he comes upon *bálcóny* in the following verse:—

‘At Edmonton, his loving wife  
From the balcony spied  
Her tender husband, wondering much  
To see how he did ride.’

620. We often find the Americans outrunning us in our national tendencies. There are many instances in which they have thrown the accent back one syllable further than is usual in the old country. When we speak of St. Augustine, we put the accent on the second syllable, and we have no idea of any other pronunciation. But in the following verse by Longfellow we have the name accented on the first syllable.

‘Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,  
That of our vices we can frame  
A ladder, if we will but tread  
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!’



In the same way they say *álly*, *ínvalid*, *pártisan*, not for the ancient weapon 'pertuisan,' but for the more familiar word; and I am informed by Mr. Fraser<sup>1</sup> that they also pronounce *resources* in a manner that would suggest the union of the French spelling of the word *ressources*, with the English trisyllabic pronunciation. Most people in New England say *vágáry* instead of *vagáry*<sup>2</sup>.

621. Hitherto we have been chiefly concerned with that interpretative power of sound which we call accent. We must now distinguish between accent and emphasis.

Accent is that elevation of the voice which distinguishes one part of a word from another, as in the compound exemplified above.

Emphasis is the distinction made between one word and another by the note or tone of its utterance.

This may happen in two ways, either grammatically or rhetorically. The 'grammatical emphasis rests upon such points as the following. There are certain words which are naturally unaccented, and in a general way it may be said that the symbolic words are so. It is the province of grammar to teach us what words are symbolic and what presentive. Grammar teaches, for instance, when the word *one* is a numeral, and when it is an indefinite pronoun. In the former case it is uttered with as full a note as any other monosyllable; but in the latter case it is toneless and enclitic. It can hardly be a good line wherein this word, standing as an indefinite pronoun, receives the ictus of the metre, as in the following:—

'Where óne might fáncy thát the ángels rést.'

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<sup>1</sup> Not yet Bishop of Manchester when these pages were written.

<sup>2</sup> North American Review, October 1871.

He would be an ingenious man who should devise a sentence in which this word ought to bear the accent. A writer in the *Christian Remembrancer* for January 1866, undertook to shew that almost any word may be placed as to be the bearer of emphasis. In proof of this an hexameter was given with *a* and *the* emphasized :

‘*A* man might have come in, but *the* man certainly never.’

This is a rhetorical emphasis, and such an emphasis can be contrived for most words. You can emphasize any word to which you can oppose a true antithesis. To the word *one* you can oppose in some instances the word *two*, or any other number. Thus *one* may be emphasized, as—

‘I asked for *one*, you gave me *two*.’

In other cases the word *none* would be a natural antithesis to *one*. But when we use the word *one* in the sense of the French pronoun ‘on,’ it is incapable of antithesis, and therefore it cannot carry emphasis. These being grammatical distinctions, we call the emphasis which is based upon them the grammatical emphasis.

622. To give another example. It belongs to grammar to direct the attention towards the antecedent referred to by any pronoun; and according as that antecedent is understood the pronoun will or will not carry emphasis.

In Psalm vii. 14 the word *him* admits of two renderings according to the antecedent which it is supposed to represent:—

‘13 If a man will not turn, he will whet his sword : he hath bent his bow and made it ready.

14 He hath prepared for him the instruments of death : he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.’

We sometimes hear it read as if it were a reflexive pro-

noun, such as would be represented in Latin by *sibi*, in which case it is toneless. But if the reference be, as it is generally understood, to 'the man who will not turn,' spoken of in the preceding verse, then the reader ought to express this by an emphatic utterance of the word *him*, such as shall make it apparent that it is equivalent to *for that man*. This is again an emphasis which is used to mark a grammatical distinction. But when words grammatically identical are exposed to variations of emphasis, this is due to the exigencies of the argument, and we call such emphasis rhetorical.

The natural tone of symbolic words is low, *I came, I saw, I conquered*. No one would emphasize the pronouns here. The same may be observed of the pronouns in the following quotation:—

'I went by, and lo, he was gone; I sought him, but his place could no where be found.'—*Psalm xxxvii. 37.*

But words of this rank may receive the rhetorical emphasis. The reply of Sir Robert Peel to Cobbett makes a good illustration:—

'Why does the hon. Member attack *me*? I have done nothing to merit his assaults. I never lent him a thousand pounds.'

Here the pronouns are emphasized, because there is an allusion to Mr. Burdett, who *had* lent Cobbett a thousand pounds, and had been rewarded with scurrility.

**623.** Emphasis, then, is a distinct thing from accent. The latter is an elevation of a syllable above the rest of the word; the former is the elevation of a word over the rest of a phrase. But it should be noticed that, while there is this difference of relation between emphasis and accent, there is, on the other hand, an identity of incidence. The

emphasis rests on the selfsame point as does the accent. We say indeed that the emphasis is on such and such a word, because by it one word is distinguished above all other words in the phrase. But the precise place of the emphasis is there where the accent is, in all words that have an accent; that is to say, in all words that have more than one syllable. In the case of a polysyllable, which has more than one accented syllable, the emphasis falls on the syllable that has the higher tone. *An accented word is emphasized by the intensification of its chief accent.*

In Acts xvii. 28, 'for we are also his offspring,' there is no doubt that the emphatic word is 'offspring.' The Greek tells us so explicitly by prefixing to this word a particle, which is in our version ill rendered by 'also.' A reader who enters into the spirit of the reasoning in this place will very markedly distinguish the word 'offspring.' And he will do so by sharpening the acuteness of that accent which already raises the first syllable above the second.

There is a well-known line in the opening of the *Satires* of Juvenal, which the greatest of translators has thus rendered, and thus emphasized by capitals:—

‘Hear, ALWAYS hear; nor ONCE the debt repay?’

In the disyllable here emphasized the emphasis rests on that syllable which had the accent while the word was in its private capacity. In fact, emphasis is a sort of public accent, which is incident to a word in regard of its external and social relations.

**624.** Where a polysyllable, like *elementary*, has two accents, the emphasis heightens the tone of that which is already the higher. In a sentence like this, ‘I was not speaking of grammar schools, but of elementary schools,’ the rhetorical

emphasis falling on *elementary* will heighten the tone of the third syllable.

In all this there is no change of quantity, no lengthening of the syllable so affected by accent and emphasis together. It is true, we often hear such a syllable very sensibly lengthened, as thus: 'I beg leave once more to repeat, that I was speaking only of ele-ma-entary schools.' The syllable is isolated and elongated very markedly, but then this is something more than emphasis, it is *stress*.

625. In living languages accent and emphasis are unwritten. The so-called French accents have but secondarily to do with the accentuation of the language, and belong primarily to its etymology and orthography. In Greek, as transmitted to us, the accents are written, but they were an invention of the grammarians of Alexandria. In the Hebrew Bible, not only are the accents written, but likewise the emphasis; these signs are, however, no part of the original text, but a scholastic notation of later times.

Written accents are very useful as historical guides to a pronunciation that might be lost without them. But for the present and living exercise of a living language they are undesirable. 'All writing tends to become traditional, and characters once established are apt to survive their signification. Had our language been accentuated in the early printed books, we should have had in them a treasure of information indeed, but it would have been misleading in modern times, and probably it would have cramped the natural development of the language. For example, we now say *whátso* and *whóso*, but in early times it was *whatsó* and *whosó*. This change is in natural and harmonious keeping with the changes that have taken place in the relative values and functions of the words entering into these compounds, as already explained above, 471. Here,

therefore, we see the accent still true to its office as an interpreter and illustrator. An instance of the old emphasis on *so* occurs in *The Faery Queene*, iii. 2. 7 :—

‘By sea, by land, where so they may be mett.’

626. But, while we make no attempt to write accent, we may be said to attempt some partial and indirect tokens of emphasis by means of our system of punctuation. It is, however, in our old Saxon literature that we find emphasis in the most remarkable manner signalised. The alliteration of the Saxon poetry not only gratified the ear with a resonance like that of modern rhyme, but it also had the rhetorical advantage of touching the emphatic words; falling as it did on the natural summits of the construction, and tinging them with the brilliance of a musical reverberation.

Alliteration did not necessarily act on the initial letter of the word; where the first syllable was naturally low-toned, the alliteration played on the initial letter of the second syllable: and this rule is ancient. We see an example of it in the following line of Wordsworth:—

‘Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!’

The most convenient illustration we can offer of the Saxon alliteration will perhaps be obtained by selecting from the Song of the Fight of Maldon some of the staves which have retained their alliteration in Mr. Freeman’s version, in *Old English History for Children*.

‘wigan wigheardne,  
se wæs haten Wulfstan.

Wodon þa wæl-wulfas,  
for wætere ne murnon.

bogan wæron bysige,  
bord ord onfeng.

A warman hard in war;  
he hight Wulistan.

Waded then the slaughter-wolves,  
for water they mourned not.

Bows were busy,  
boards the point received.

Wiga wintrum geong,  
wordum mælde.

Warrior of winters young,  
with words spake.

hále to háme,  
oððe on here cringan.

Hale to home,  
or in the host cringe.

mód sceal þe máre,  
þe ure mægen lytlað.

Mood shall the more be,  
as our main lessens.

627. Had we continued to be isolated from the Romanesque influence, like the people of Iceland, we might have developed this form of poetry into something of the luxuriance and precision which it has attained in Icelandic literature, as may be seen in the preface to Mr. Magnusson's *Lilja*, 1870.

Since we have adopted the French principles of poetry, alliteration has retired into the background. As late as the fourteenth century we find it pretty equally matched as a rival with the iambic couplet in rhyme; but within that century the victory of the latter was assured. By Shakespeare's time alliteration was spoken of contemptuously, as if it had reached the stage of senility. The pedantic Holofernes says he will 'affect the letter,' that is to say compose verses with alliteration.

'Hol. I will something affect the letter, for it argues facilitie.'

*Loves Labours Lost*, iv. 2.

628. But however much it had come to be despised, it has notwithstanding managed to retain a certain position in our poetry. 'Alliteration's artful aid' is still found to be a real auxiliary to the poet, which, sparingly and unobtrusively used, has often an artistic effect, though its agency may be unnoticed. Shakespeare himself provides us with some very pretty samples of alliteration.

'If what in rest you haue, in right you hold.'

*King Jobn*, iv. 2. 55.

‘Fear’d by their breed, and famous for their birth.’

*King Richard II*, ii. 1. 52.

One of the boldest poets in its use is Spenser, as—

‘Much daunted with that dint her sense was daz’d.’

‘Add faith unto your force, and be not faint.’

‘Sober he seemde, and very sagely sad.’

*The Faery Queene*, i. 1. 18, 19, 29.

In *Blew Cap for Me*, a ballad of the time of James I, is this good alliterative line:—

‘A haughty high German of Hamborough towne.’

In Milton alliteration is frequent:—

‘Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first  
By winning words to conquer willing hearts.’

*Paradise Regained*, i. 221.

‘A table richly spread in regal mode.’ Id. ii. 339.

‘Weepe no more, wofull shepherds, weepe no more.’

*Lycidas*.

It may be found in every poet:

‘The French came foremost, battailous and bold.’

*Fairfax, Tasso*, i. 37.

‘Talk with such toss and saunter with such swing.’

*Crabbe, Parish Register*, Part II.

‘The ploughman homeward plods his weary way.’

*Gray, Elegy*.

‘Now, tho’ my lamp was lighted late, there’s One will let me in;’—

*Alfred Tennyson, The May Queen*.

A very good example, and one which, from the coin-



cidence of the emphasis with the alliteration, recalls the ancient models, is this from Cowper's *Garden*:—

'He settles next upon the sloping mount,  
Whose sharp declivity shoots off secure  
From the dash'd pane the deluge as it falls.'

The *Christian Year* affords some very graceful examples. On Palm Sunday we read—

'Ye whose hearts are beating high  
With the pulse of Poesy.  
.  
.  
By whose strength ye sweep the string.  
.  
.  
That thine angels' harps may ne'er  
Fail to find fit echoing here.'

**628 a.** The ancient taste for alliteration has produced some permanent effects on the stock phraseology of the language. It is doubtless the old poetic sound that has guaranteed against the ravages of time such conventional couplings as these:—

'Cark and care.'  
'Rhyme and reason.'  
'Watch and ward.' 490.  
'Weal and woe.'  
'Weald and wold.' Longfellow, *Olaf*, xv.  
'Wise and wary.' Chaucer, *Prologue*, l. 312.  
'Wit and wisdom.'

The old word *sooth* survives in the compounds *forsooth* and *soothsayer*, but not in its simple form, except in the alliterative phrase *sooth to say*. In Saxon times the legal phraseology was sometimes yoked together by alliteration, as in those famous formulæ which outlived their significance, *sac and soc*, *toll and team*.

More recently we see it in heraldic mottoes, as at Winchester in *Manners makyth man*; and at Mells in *Time trieth troth*.

A little attention might discover more instances, showing how dear to humanity is the very jingle of his speech, and how he loves, even in his riper age, to keep up a sort of phantom of that harmony which in his infancy blended sound and sense in one undistinguishable chime.

629. The various kinds of by-play in poetry, such as alliteration, rhyme, and assonance, seem all to harmonise with the accentuation. While alliteration belongs naturally to a language which tends to throw its accent as far back as possible towards the beginning of the word, rhyme and assonance suit those which lean rather towards a terminal accentuation. Hence alliteration is the domestic artifice of the Gothic poetry, as rhyme and assonance are of the Romanesque. Rhyme has indeed won its way, not only in England, but in nearly all the other seats of Gothic dialects; still it is in the Romance literatures that we must observe it, if we would see it in the full swing which is possible only in its native element.

630. Let us conclude this section with an observation of a rhetorical kind in regard to the illustrative energies of sound.

A rich and various modulation is the correlative of a richly variable collocation in matter of syntax. One illustration of this may be gathered from the fact that all languages use greater freedom of collocation in poetry than in prose; that is to say, in the more highly modulated literature the freedom of displacement is greater. Anything like the following would be simply impossible in English prose:—

‘Who meanes no guile be guiled soonest shall.’

. *The Faery Queene*, iii. l. 54.

Another manifest illustration of the same lies in the fact that it is in the most musical languages we meet with the extremest liberty of collocation. How strangely variable was the collocation of the classical languages is pretty well known to all of us, whose education consisted largely in 'construing Greek and Latin,' that is to say, in bringing together from the most distant parts of the sentence the words that belonged to one another functionally. If we have in English less of such violent and apparently arbitrary displacements, it should be remembered that we also have less of musical animation to render justice withal to the signification of such displacements. And further, if the modern languages generally have less variation of arrangement than the ancient classics had, it is supposed that even the most musical of the modern languages are less musical than were the Greek and Latin. But in this sovereign quality of music, a language is not doomed to be stationary. There is a progress in this no less than in syntax. And as an argument that musical progress has been made in English, we have only to reflect how modern is the public sense of modulation, and the general demand that is made for 'good reading.' All things are double over against one another; and the demand for well-modulated reading is one indication that the power and range of modulation is progressing. And with this modulatory progress there is certainly a collocatory progress afoot. The proofs are not perhaps very conspicuous, but they are visible to those who look for them, demonstrating that a greater elasticity and freedom of displacement (so to speak) are being acquired by the English language.

**631.** The following quotation affords an example of the point and force that may be gained by displacement:—

by us.

‘The sphere of our belief is much more extensive than the sphere of our knowledge; and therefore, when I deny that the infinite can by us be known, I am far from denying that by us it is, must, and ought to be, believed.’—Sir William Hamilton.

In public speaking such a displacement would seem stilted, and it would have a bad effect unless it were borne out by a thoroughly appropriate modulation.

The illustrative utterance of the English language is worthy of attention in the interest of national culture; for if all who have something profitable to say were skilful modulators of their mother tongue, they would find more docility in the ranks of the popular audience. ‘The famous Bishop of Cloyne seems to have been fully convinced of this, when among his other queries, he put the following one: Q. Whether half the learning of these kingdoms be not lost, for want of having a proper delivery taught in our schools and colleges?’<sup>1</sup>

## II. OF SOUND AS A FORMATIVE AGENCY.

**632.** We now proceed to consider sound as a power which affects the forms of words. The attention must be directed to the accentuation and its consequences.

1. The simplest instance is where the accent has a conservative effect upon the accented syllable, while the unaccented syllable gradually shrinks or decays. Thus, in the word *goodwife* the accented syllable was preserved in its entirety, while the second syllable shrank up into such littleness as we are familiar with in the form of *goody*. This is

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Sheridan, *Lectures on the Art of Reading*, third ed. London 1787; p. 117.

a plain example of a transformation conditioned by the incidence of sound.

In American literature the word *grandsire* has assumed the form of *grandsir* from the same cause. The accented syllable remains complete, while the unaccented dwindles. The following quotation will be sufficient to establish the fact:—

‘Viewing their townsman in this aspect, the people revoked the courteous doctorate with which they had hitherto decorated him, and now knew him most familiarly as Grandsir Dolliver. . . . All the younger portion of the inhabitants unconsciously ascribed a sort of aged immortality to Grandsir Dolliver’s infirm and reverend presence.’—Nathaniel Hawthorne.

The way in which the accent has wrought in determining the transformation of words from Latin into French, has been briefly and effectively shewn by M. Auguste Brachet, in his *Historical Grammar of the French Tongue*. The unaccented parts have often lost their distinct syllabification, while the syllable accented in Latin has almost become the whole word in French. Thus—

| LATIN.   | FRENCH, |
|----------|---------|
| ángelus  | ange    |
| cóputum  | compte  |
| débitum  | dette   |
| décima   | dime    |
| pórticus | porche  |

Mr. Kitchin’s Translation, p. 33 sqq.

This is but a small part of the case as there expounded, and the student should by all means go to the book itself, and master this portion, for this is of the marrow of philology.

A good example is afforded by the modern Greek negative. The negative in modern Greek is *δέν*, and this is an abbreviation from the classical *οὐδέν*. A person who looked at *οὐδέν* might be inclined to say that the essential power of that negative is stored up in the first syllable, while the

second is a mere expletive or appendage. From this point of view it would be inconceivable how the first part should perish and the second remain. But if we consider that the first is the elder part, and that the second was added for the sake of emphasis, it is plain that the second part would carry the accent, as indeed the traditional notation represents it.

This effect of the accent must be particularly attended to, as presenting, perhaps, the best of all keys for explaining the transformations which take place in language. Were we to disregard the influence of the laws of sound, and imagine that the sense only was to be taken into consideration, we should often be at a loss to understand why the most sense-bearing syllables have decayed, while the less significant ones have retained their integrity. The national and characteristic Scottish word *unco* is an instance. It is composed of *un* and *couth*, the ancient participle of the verb *cunnan*, 'to know.' So that *uncouth* meant 'unknown,' 'unheard-of,' and consequently 'strange.' In England the word has retained its original form, because the accent is on the second syllable; but in Scotland, the accent having been placed on the first, and the word having been mostly used in such a position as to intensify the accent by emphasis, the second syllable has coiled up into its present condition.

2. So far we have been considering the formative effect of accent in its simplest instances,—those namely where the accented syllable retains its integrity, while the unaccented seems to wither, as it were, by neglect. We now proceed to a somewhat more complicated phenomenon. The accent does not always prove so conservative in its operation. It is like wind to fire; a moderate current of air will keep the fire steadily burning, but if the air be applied in excess, it will destroy the flame which before it preserved. So with

the accent ; if it be highly intensified it will not conserve, but rather work an alteration in the syllable to which it is applied.

A familiar instance of the effect of an accent in altering the form of a syllable may be seen in the word *woman*. This word is compounded of *wife* and *man*, and the change which has taken place in the first syllable exhibits the altering effect of an intense accent<sup>1</sup>.

The same thing may be observed in the word *gospel*. This word is composed of *good* and *spel*; but the first syllable has been reduced to its present proportion by 'correction,' if we may revive the very happy Latin term by which a shortened syllable was said to be seized or snatched.

Other familiar instances are *gossip*, *shepherd*, and the pronunciation of *vineyard*. In all these we see the accented syllable has suffered alteration through its accentuation.

When we seek the cause why accent should have operated in manners so opposite, we shall probably find that the diversity of result is due to a difference of situation in the usual employment of a given word. A word, for instance, whose lot it was to be often emphasized would naturally be the more liable to correction of its accented syllable.

3. As we have seen that each of the syllables of a dissyllabic word may be in different manners affected by the accent, so we may next observe that both of these changes may sometimes be found in one and the same word.

The word *housewife* is often pronounced *huz'if*, and this pronunciation is the traditional one. The full pronunciation of all the letters in *housewife* is not produced by the natural action of the mother tongue, but by literary education.

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<sup>1</sup> This is not the whole account of *woman*, because it does not explain the *o*; perhaps the plural would have made a better example for this place in its pronounced form *wimmen*.

Regarding *huz'if*, then, as the natural and spontaneous utterance of *housewife*, we see that both syllables have suffered alteration. The attenuated condition of the second syllable is accounted for by the absence of the accent; while the first syllable has suffered from an opposite cause, namely, the intensification produced by the accent. And when, through the beat of metre, the accent becomes emphasis, we find the first syllable spelt with correption, even in literature:—

‘Beauty is Nature’s brag, and must be shown  
In Courts, at Feasts, and high Solemnities,  
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;  
It is for homely features to keep home,  
They had their name thence; coarse complexions  
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply  
The sampler, and to teize the huswives wooll.’

John Milton, *Comus*, 751 (ed. Tonson, 1725).

The name of Shakspeare, it is well known, appears with many variations of orthography. The most curious perhaps of all its forms is that of *Shaxper*<sup>1</sup>, which exhibits both of the phenomena now under consideration. In *Shaxper* we see that each of the two syllables is shrunkēn, but from opposite causes. The first syllable is compressed by the intensifying power of the accent, while the second syllable is impaired by reason of the languor of a toneless position.

**633.** These changes, which thus result from accentuation, sometimes run into curious phonetic distortions. Standish is the name of a place in Gloucestershire, but it is better known as a man’s name in the poetry of Longfellow. This word is an altered form of *Stonehouse*, or rather of that word in its ancient shape of *Stanhus*. Here the accented syllable has drawn a *ɒ* on to it, and the languid syllable an *h*. The former is but an instance of a well-known phonetic affinity

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<sup>1</sup> This form is found with the date of 1579. *Shakspeareana Genealogica*, compiled by George Russell French. 1869.



which in various languages has so often produced the combination *nd*. But that the *hus* should have lapsed into *ish* is something more particularly English, and belongs to the same class of tendencies by which that sound has often risen among us both out of Saxon and out of French materials. (74.)

A great number of transformations which are a stock item of astonishment with us, are only to be accounted for by the consideration of accentual conditions. Such are *Ciceler* for Cirencester; *Yenton* for Erdington; *Ransom* for Rampisham (Dorset); *Posset* for Portishead, &c. So Clatfordtun has become Claverton; Cunacaleah is Conkwell, &c. The scene of the following question is laid in the time of Queen Anne:—

‘ *Candish, Chumley.*

‘Why should we say goold and write gold, and call china chayny, and Cavendish Candish, and Cholmondeley Chumley?’—W. M. Thackeray, *Esmond*, Bk. III. ch. iii.

Here may be noticed such a familiar formula as *Good bye*, which has come out of ‘God be with ye.’

634. This springs from that excess of clustering words together in pronunciation which may be observed in English country places. I often find it hard to understand the name of a rustic child, because the child utters Christian and surname together as one word. One little girl I well remember how she puzzled me by repeatedly telling me she was called ‘Anook.’ I had to make further enquiries before I learnt that this represented Ann Hook. The following instance is not the less to our purpose because it is borrowed from fiction:—

‘However, Miss Max’ had adopted Jameskennet (she always said the name as one word), and he had been a great comfort to them all.’—L. Knatchbull-Hugessen, *The Affirmative* (Macmillan’s Magazine, May, 1870).

The word *hobgoblin* owes its form to this habit. It means the goblin called Rob, just as the household elf was called Robin Goodfellow.

It is to accent that we must attribute the rise of flexion, in the great bulk of the phenomena included under that name. Flexion is the result of the adhesion of low-toned words to those which are higher toned, to words rendered eminent and attractive by a superiority of accent. Thus, if the word *IBO* resolves itself into three words answering to the three letters of which the word is now composed, and if these three words stood once free of each other in this order—*GO WILL I*, it was because of the accentual pre-eminence of *GO* that the other two words first of all began to lean enclitically on it, and at length were absorbed into unity with it.

635. And as the action of sound is a matter of great consequence in the shaping of words, so also we may detect a like power working to effect transpositions in phraseology. Why do people often say ‘bred and born’ instead of ‘born and bred,’ except that they like the sound of it better? There is in most newspapers a quarter which is thus headed:—*Births, Marriages, and Deaths*. But in conversation it is hardly ever quoted in this form. The established colloquial form of the phrase is this:—*Births, Deaths and Marriages*. Now it is plain that the latter does violence to the natural order of things; to which the printed formula adheres. Whence then has this inconsequence arisen? Solely, as it seems, from the fact that the less reasonable order offers the more agreeable cadence to the ear.

But we are already entering into the province of the next section.

### III. OF SOUND AS AN INSTINCTIVE OBJECT OF ATTRACTION.

**636.** Our path leads us more and more away from the conscious action of man in the development of speech, to mark how the sentient and instinctive tendencies of his nature claim their part in the great result. There is observable a certain drawing towards a fitness of sound; that is to say, the speaker of every stage and grade strives after such an expression as shall erect his language into a sort of music to his own ear. And this is reached when harmony is established between the meaning and the sound; that is to say, when the sound strikes the ear as a fit accompaniment to the thought. It is a first necessity in language, that it should gratify the ear of the speaker.

As the savage and the civilised man have different standards of music, so have they different standards of what is harmonious in their speech. Civilised nations are converging towards an agreement on both these heads; but they will sooner be at one on the matter of music than they will on the modulation of speech. Of these two, music is the simpler, and the more amenable to scientific treatment. In the very elements of the melody of language, namely the tones which are proper to the several vowels, there is an hereditary difference which, though of the most delicate and subtle kind, yet produces by combination wide divergencies in the modulation of speech. Each separate nation has apparently a pitch of its own.

**637.** The following paragraph, which is borrowed from the *Academy* (December 1870), gives the results of some minute investigations which have recently been made in the vowel-gamut of the North German dialect:—

'THE NATURE OF VOWEL-SOUNDS.—A discovery announced in the *Comptes rendus* for the 25th of last April, by Rudolf Koenig, the well-known maker of acoustical apparatus, seems likely to have an important bearing on some points of philology. It is known that Helmholtz has shown that the distinctive character of the vowel-sounds is due to fixed tones characteristic of each, and that he has investigated the pitch of the tones proper to the different vowels, by examining the resonance of the cavity of the mouth, when adjusted for whispering them, by means of vibrating tuning-forks held near the opening of the lips. In this way he arrived at the following results:—

|                           |          |                       |                        |                         |                       |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Vowel . . . . .           | U        | O                     | A                      | E                       | I                     |
| Characteristic tone . . . | <i>f</i> | <i>b<sup>1</sup>b</i> | <i>b<sup>11</sup>b</i> | <i>b<sup>111</sup>b</i> | <i>d<sup>1v</sup></i> |

Koenig, on repeating Helmholtz's experiments with more complete apparatus, has entirely confirmed his general result, but has arrived at slightly different conclusions as to the characteristic tones of the vowels U and I, which he finds are respectively lower and higher octaves of the tones of the intermediate vowels. For the North German pronunciation (to which Helmholtz's results also refer) the vowels are accordingly characterised as follows:—

|                                                 |           |                       |                        |                         |                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Vowel . . . . .                                 | U         | O                     | A                      | E                       | I                     |
| Characteristic tone . . .                       | <i>bb</i> | <i>b<sup>1</sup>b</i> | <i>b<sup>11</sup>b</i> | <i>b<sup>111</sup>b</i> | <i>b<sup>1v</sup></i> |
| Simple vibrations per }<br>second (approximate) | 450       | 900                   | 1800                   | 3600                    | 7200                  |

As Koenig points out, it is more than probable that the physiological reason of the occurrence of nearly the same five vowels in different languages, is to be sought for in the simplicity of these ratios, just as the simplicity of the ratios of the musical intervals explains the adoption of the same intervals by most nations.'

638. In consonants the great difference of national standards is manifest. The Gothic ear enjoys a precipitous consonantism, while the Roman family prefers a smooth and gentle one. And as a natural consequence of this difference, we, when we were most Gothic, could endure an abruptness of consonants which now that we have been Frenchified in our tastes, is displeasing to our national ear.

Thus, we now count it vulgar to say *ax*, and yet this sound was quite acceptable to the most cultivated Saxon. We have transposed the consonants, and instead of *ks* we say *sk*; instead of *ax* we say *ask*; and we prefer *tusks* to the Saxon *tuxas*. In like manner, we now say *grass*, *cress*,

where the old forms were *gærs, cærs*. (Reversely, however, we say *bird, third, cart*, in preference to the old forms *brid, thridde, cræt*.) There is observable at different eras in the language of a nation a certain revolution of taste in regard to sounds; and this exhibits itself in modifications of the vowel-system, and in conversions or transpositions of old-established consonantisms. It is not possible (apparently) to reduce such cases to any other principle than this,—that it has pleased the national ear it should be so.

639. This national taste is inherited so early, and rooted so deep in the individual, that it becomes part of his nature, and forms the starting-point of all his judgments as to what is fitting or unfitting in the harmony of sound with sense. The association between his words and his thoughts is so intimate, that to his ear the words seem to give out a sound like the sound of the thing signified; and, further, that his words seem *like* the thing signified even where it is an abstract idea or some other creation of the mind. So that it becomes a difficult matter to say how far certain words are really like certain natural sounds; or whether it is only an inveterate mental association that makes us think so. That is the first difficulty about the onomatopoetic theory of the origin of language. That theory appeals to a sense which we have of likeness between many of our words and the natural sounds of the things signified. Sir John Lubbock has given lists of words of which, in his opinion, there can be no doubt that the origin is onomatopoetic. That is to say, they were coined at a blow in imitation of audible sounds, or they can at least be traced back to such a coinage. Now the fact is, that many of them are resolvable into earlier forms, which had meanings widely distinct from the present meanings; and the onomatopoetic appearances are the results of that instinctive attention to fitness of sound, which is one of the

habitual accompaniments of linguistic development. An example will make it clearer : Sir John Lubbock says,—

‘From *pr*, or *prut*, indicating contempt or self-conceit, comes *proud*, *pride*, &c.

From *fi*, we have *fiend*, *foe*, *feud*, *foul*, Latin *putris*, Fr. *puer*, *filth*, *fulsome*, *fear*. In addition I will only remark that,

From that of smacking the lips we get *γλυκὺς*, *dulcis*, *lick*, *like*.’

*On the Origin of Civilization*, p. 282.

We shall all as Englishmen be ready to acknowledge that *proud* and *pride* do sound like the things signified. But how are we to reconcile the supposed onomatopoetic origin of these words with the fact that they have an earlier history<sup>1</sup>, which leads us far enough out of the track of the idea here assigned to *pr*.

640. It is not too much to say that all the above examples rest upon the ground of a superficial appearance, and that their onomatopoetic origin will not bear inspection. The word *like* is here derived from the sound of smacking the lips. It is in fact the Old Saxon word for ‘body,’ *lic*, which in German is to this day *Leib*, pronounced almost exactly as our *like*. Great as the distance may seem between *body* and the *liking* of taste, it is measured at two strides. There is but one middle term between these wide extremes. From *substance* to *similitude* the transition is frequent and familiar ; and so *lic*, ‘body,’ easily produced the adjective *like*. That *likeness* breeds *liking* is proverbial.

One of the words which has been thought to favour the onomatopoetic theory is *squirrel*. If this word had been destitute of a pedigree, and had been dashed off at a moment of happy invention, then its evidence might have been in-

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<sup>1</sup> They are traced either to Old French *prude*, moral, decorous ; or to the Latin *prudens*, *providus*, prudent, provident.—Diez, *Lexicon Linguarum Romanarum*.

voked in that direction. But when we perceive that it has a long Greek derivation, and that the idea upon which the word was moulded was that of *umbrella-tail*, we can only marvel at the sonorous fitness of the word to express the manners of the funny little creature, after all traces of the signification of the word had been forgotten; and we must allow that somewhere in the speech-making genius there lives a faculty which concerns itself to seek the means of harmony between sound and sense.

641. It would indeed be too much to say that the basis of this harmony is not in any absolute relations between things and ideas on the one hand, and sounds on the other. But this may be said,—that while such absolute relations have been often maintained with a certain show of reason, there has not as yet been any proof such as science can take cognisance of. It seems rather as if each race had its own fundamental notions of harmony, and as if the consonance of words were continually striving to adapt itself to these with a sort of unconscious accommodation. Well as *squirrel* seems to us to harmonise with its object, we cannot doubt that in the judgment of a Red Indian it would sound very inappropriate, and that he would consider *Adjidaumo* as much more to the point.

‘Boys shall call you Adjidaumo,  
Tail in air the boys shall call you.’

H. W. Longfellow, *Song of Hiawatha*.

Language is beyond all doubt imitative. The Hindus have a drum they call *tom-tom*, and this word is surely imitative. So much we may venture to assume without any knowledge of their speech. But whether the word originated in imitation is a very different question, and one which demands for its answer a close examination of the Hindu and perhaps other languages besides. Words may be imitative without

having originated in an act of imitation. A connection has too hastily been assumed between imitation and initiation. On the fifth bell in Dunkerton Church, Somersetshire, besides the record, 'Thomas Bilbee cast all wee, 1732,' are found the lines:—

'Harke how the chiriping Treable sound so clear,  
While rowelling Tom com tombeling in the reare.'

This is manifestly imitative; the sequence 'tom com tombe-ling' is worthy to be set beside the Indian *tom-tom*. Yet this imitation has nothing to do with the origin of these words, whereof the first is Hebrew, the second Gothic, and the third French.

642. Our present interest in the onomatopoeic theory is rather incidental. It bears by its very existence a valuable testimony to that principle which we are just now concerned to establish. It proves that several men of cultivated faculties do perceive throughout language such a harmony of the sound of words with their sense, that they not only would rest satisfied with an account of the origin of language which referred all to external sound, but that it appears to them the most rational explanation. Those who reject the onomatopoeic theory need not discredit the phenomenon on which it relies. They may admit that there is, running through a great part of human speech, a remarkable chime of sound with sense, and yet doubt whether language was founded upon imitation. The phenomenon itself may have been as primitive as it is persistent, for the strongest examples are among the latest efforts of the genius of speech. Accompanying language at every stage, it comes out most avowedly in its maturest forms. That the motion of poetry should keep pace with the thought is an axiom: if the subject is toilsome, then

'The line too labours, and the verse runs slow.'



And as with the whole, so with the subordinate members. At every stage in the development of every word, there are a great number of possible variations, or alternative modes of utterance; and before a word settles down into an established position, it must have been (unconsciously) recognised as the best for that particular purpose of all those that were in the field of choice; and among the qualifications and conditions of the competition, the satisfaction of the ear has never been absent, though it may have been little noticed.

When we speak of the satisfaction of the ear, we of course mean a mental gratification; namely, that which arises from a sense of harmony between voice and meaning. There is a pleasure in this, and as there is a pleasure in it, so there is naturally a preference for it, and, other things being equal, the utterance which gives this pleasure will survive one that gives it not.

643. Taking it then as certain, that there is in speech a striving after this expressiveness of sound, we must next observe the varying ways it has of displaying itself in the successive stages of the development of human speech. It does not always occupy the same ground. *The English language has passed that stage in which words are palpably modified to meet the requirements of the ear.* And accordingly, those who make lists of words in support of the onomatopoeic theory, will be found to lean greatly to old-fashioned and homely and colloquial words, in short to such words as figure but little in the forefront of modern English literature. They are the offspring of a period when the chime of the word was more aimed at than it now is. And we may in some ancient literatures find this so-called onomatopœia in greater vigour than in English.

Most abounding in examples of this kind is the Hebrew

language, where we have a glorious literature that was formed under the conditions now spoken of; that is to say, while the language was still sensitive to the grouping of consonants in the chime of its words. The details cannot here be produced, but an illustration or two may be given<sup>1</sup>.

It is no mere illusion which causes even a slightly imbued Hebrew scholar to feel that in the kindly, soothing, 'nocturne' sound of *lailah*, the Hebrew word for *night*, there is a suggestion of that thought which some have supposed to be etymologically expressed by the Greek *εὐφρόνη*, the thought which is thus rendered in familiar lines from the Hebrew fountain:—

'And from the due returns of night  
Divine instruction springs.'

644. The Hebrew word for 'righteousness,' *zēdākah*, has a melody which chimes admirably with the idea. Whatever beauty of thought is embodied in the Themis and Dikē and Astræa of the Greek personifications, may all be heard in the sound of the Hebrew *zēdākah*. Nor is this mere fancy. That the word spoke not to the mind alone through the ear as a mere channel, but that the sound of the word had a musical eloquence for the musical ear of the Hebrew, we have such evidence as the case admits of. We find it set against the cry of the oppressed *zēghākah*, where the dental has been exchanged for the most rigid of gutturals, represented here by *gh*. In fact, there is a stage in language when the musical appropriateness of the word is the chief care. This is the age of the Hebrew antitheses and parallelisms. In the passage alluded to, not only is there the contrast

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<sup>1</sup> If the reader desires to enquire further into the onomatopoeic theory, he will find all that can be said in its favour in the philological writings of Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood; and there is a criticism of onomatopœia by Professor Max Müller in the Ninth Lecture of his First Series.

already described, but also that of *mishpat*, 'judgment,' with *mishpach*, 'oppression,' and here also the gentle sound of the dental is changed to the grating sound of a guttural, though milder than in the other instance.

'He looked for judgment (*mishpat*), but behold oppression (*mishpach*); for righteousness (*zēdūkab*), but behold a cry (*zēgbākab*).'*—Isaiah v. 7.*

**645.** This class of cases has been sometimes inconsiderately treated as if they approached in some sort to the nature of the paronomasia or pun. But no two things could be more distinct. The pun rests on a duplicity of sense under unity of sound, and it is essentially of a laughter-provoking nature, because it is a wanton rebellion against the first motive of speech, whereby diversity of sense induces diversity of sound, that the sound may be an echo to the sense.

A few years ago, in the time of spring, two men were riding together across the fields, and observing how backward the season was. Neither of them had seen the may-blossom yet. Presently one dashed ahead towards something white in a distant hedge, but soon turned round again, exclaiming to his companion: 'No, it is not the may, it is only the common sloe,' whereupon the ready answer came: 'Then the may is uncommon slow!' That is a pun, where the unity of sound between widely different words is suddenly and surprisingly fitted into the sense of the conversation.

Different, but akin, is the Double-meaning, where the two senses of an identical word are played upon. Mr. Wadge, in his speech of thanks on the occasion of a presentation banquet in his honour, at the Albion, June 1, 1866, was dilating on the interest he had taken from earliest youth in the study of mineral deposits; how he found matter even in his school-books to feed this enthusiasm; how he devoured Lucretius *De Rerum Natura*, but especially the passage about the discovery of metals. This being delivered with

some intenseness, was pleasantly relieved by the ensuing remark, that only in one thing did the speaker differ from the poet. Lucretius deplored that whereas in the good old time, brass was highly valued and gold disregarded, now that was changed,—gold had dethroned brass, and the harder metal was of no account by the side of the softer

‘I have nothing to say against gold, which certainly now, as when the poet wrote, is *in summum honorem*; but I must say something for brass. (Laughter.) Whatever may have been the case when Lucretius wrote, it cannot now be truly said *nunc jacet aes*; for in my experience brass is, next to gold, the greatest power that influences the world. (Great cheers and laughter.)’

Such are the double-meaning and the pun. But these things are very wide of the feature now under consideration. These are laughable from their eccentricity. They are funny because they traverse the first law of language in a playful manner. As an expression of wit they are perfectly legitimate only so long as the rhetoric of the language turns on word-sound. Hence we may observe that the mind of the scholar, that is to say, the mind which is imbued with the elder conditions of language, is ever prone to punning. But in English they are now half-recognised, because the language has passed beyond that stage of which they were a wanton inversion.

**646.** In contradistinction to all this, the Hebrew antitheses arise out of the legitimate exercise of the rhetorical properties of the language; and their very consonance with the present condition of the language is an element of their solemnity.

In every successive stage of language there is a music proper to that stage; and if we seek the focus of that music, we must watch the action of the language in its exalted moods. When we see that the poetry and the oratory of a language avails itself largely of the contrast of word-sounds,

we cannot doubt that the national ear is most alive to that particular form of speech-music which gives prominence to individual words. This is the case of the Hebrew parallelisms; and it is the key also to alliteration in poetry, where the echo of word to word is the sonorous organ of the poet. But a period comes in the course of the higher development of language, when the sonorousness of words gives place to the sentiment of modulation, whereby a musical unity is given to the sentence like the unity of thought. It is to this that the foremost languages of the world, and the English language for one, have now attained. If we look at Saxon literature, we see two widely different eras of language living on side by side, the elder form in the poetry, and the later one in the prose. The alliterative poetry belongs to an age in which the word-sound was the prominent feature; the prose is already far gone into that stage in which the sound of the word has fallen back and become secondary to the rhythm of the sentence. The development of rhythm had already become so full and ample by the time of the Conquest, that the restraint of iambic metre was needful, and it was readily accepted at the hands of our French instructors. Rhyme also was adopted, not indeed for the first time, for occasional examples occur before; but the general use of rhyme came in with the iambic metre under French influence.

647. Rhyme is an attendant upon metre; its office is to mark the 'verse' or turn of the metre, where it begins again. Rhyme is an insignificant thing philologically, as compared with alliteration: for whereas this is, as we have before shown, an accentual reverberation, and rests upon the most vital part of words; rhyme is but a syllabic resonance, and rests most frequently upon those syllables which are vocally of the lowest consideration. It is, however, one among the

many little tributaries towards the evidence of a fondness in man for a sonorous accompaniment to his language. And inasmuch as the turn of the verse is for the most part at a rhythmical division, rhyme is thus wedded to rhythm, and so far it is rescued from being a mere external appendage productive only of a sensual effect. Rhyme is thus seen to act as a medium between metre and rhythm.

Rhyme has developed its luxuriance in its native regions, that is to say in the Romanesque dialects. The rhyming faculty was not born with our speech, and it is still but imperfectly naturalised among us. The English language is found to be poor in rhymes when it is put to the proof, as in the essay of translating Dante in his own *terza rima*.

Chaucer pointed to the difficulties of rhyming in English, and said he could not keep pace with the French rhymes:—

‘Hit is a grete penaunce,  
Syth ryme in Englissh hath such skarsete,  
To folowe worde by worde the curiostie  
Of Graunson, floure of them that make in Fraunce.’

*The Complaynt of Mars and Venus.*

648. Metre and rhythm must move together, in order to produce poetic harmony. Metre is to rhythm what logic is to rhetoric; what the bone frame of an animal is to its living form and movements. As the bony structure of a beautiful animal is amply enveloped; as the logic of a good discourse is there, but undisplayed,—so the metre of good poetry is lost to the view, while the ear is entirely occupied with its rhythm. And as men use rhetoric before logic, so, likewise, did they use rhythm before metre. Metre may be artificially transplanted from one nation to another, as the French metre was transplanted to our language. But rhythm is more deeply rooted in the race and nation, and the individual writer can only within a limited range play

variations upon the natural rhythm of his mother tongue. Up to a certain point we give a poet the credit of his rhythm, as we do to Milton; but the elemental stuff out of which it is made is rather an inheritance than a personal product. Every man inherits a certain national intonation. This is that which is most ineradicable of all things which go to constitute language. This is that which we call the brogue of the Irishman, the accent of the Scotchman, or of the Welshman. By great care and early training it may be disciplined out of an individual, but we have no experience of its wearing out of a population. The people of Devon, who hardly retain two Welsh words in their speech, have an intonation so peculiar, that it can only be interpreted as a relic of the otherwise extinct West-Welsh language.

Any one, with an ear for the melody of language, and with a heart accessible to romantic feelings, must be drawn towards the Irish people, if it were only for the singular and mysterious air which constitutes the melody of their speech. True, they speak Saxon now instead of Erse, but the rhythm is unshaken. It runs up into, and is indistinguishable from, that native music which is at once the surest exponent of national character and its most tenacious product, overliving the extinction of all other heirlooms.

649. The distinctiveness of all that which we call brogue, accent, &c., is ultimately resolvable into a speciality of modulation or rhythm. Here is the stronghold of Nature and the seat of national and provincial peculiarity. The departure of the English language from the music of the Saxon, is the greatest of all evidences how profound a change was accomplished by the great French interval of the transition. Had the new language started with a provincial basis, instead of springing up as it did in the Court, the result might have been different. As it was, we got a

new music, based on a new key-note, and one quite distinct from any of its constituent elements.

But while we acknowledge in rhythm something profounder than metre, we must not deny to the latter a certain magisterial and interpretative function, which it obtains by its position and office. As the man of formulas often directs, and sometimes practically determines the action of his superior, so metre exercises a sort of judicature even over rhythm.

Metre acts as a stiffener to the rhythm. It has on the one hand a repressive, and on the other a sustaining agency. It helps to sustain elevation, while it controls the natural swell of enthusiastic rhythm. This constraint exercised by metre over the rhythmical movement is least felt in blank verse, because terminal rhymes are like so many studs or clasps, pinning down the metre from point to point, and adding greatly to its stringency.

**650.** The relation of verse to syntax is undetermined. The line may end with a grammatical pause, or it may end in the middle of a phrase where the most lavish punctuationist could not bestow a comma. But it must never mar the rhythm: as a rule, the turn of a verse must coincide with a rhythmical subdivision, and these are finer and more frequent than grammatical subdivisions.

‘So thy dark arches, London Bridge, bestride  
Indignant Thames, and part his angry tide.’

The poetry of the *Anti-Jacobin* is a good repertory for varieties of verse-making, because it contains lawless as well as lawful examples. In the above couplet the reader will perceive that though there is not a grammatical division between the lines, there is a rhythmical one, and that there is a real gain to the effect by the voice being made to rest



a perceptible time on *bestride*: the modulation so obtained is a help to the picture on the imagination.

One of the commonest means for producing the effect of drollery in verse, is by offending against this rule, and breaking the verse in spite of rhythm.

'Weary Knife-grinder! little think the proud ones,  
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-  
road, what hard work 'tis crying all day "Knives and  
Scissors to grind O!"'

In the old alliterative poetry, the turn of the verse was decided solely by the sentiment of rhythm, but in modern times it hangs on metre and rhyme.

651. Of all the forms which the Romanesque metres have assumed in the English language the blank verse is that which we have most completely nationalised and made our own; and the probable explanation of this is, that Rhyme is too confining for our native rhythm, when it would put forth its full strength. On the other hand, Metre, though it restrains, does unquestionably help to sustain the elevation, by the way in which it brings out the subordinate pauses and finer articulations in the rhythm. I would ask the reader to consider the following lines, lending his ear especially to the verse-endings which close without punctuation:—

'A gracious spirit o'er this earth presides,  
And o'er the heart of man: invisibly  
It comes, to works of unproved delight,  
And tendency benign, directing those  
Who care not, know not, think not what they do.  
The tales that charm away the wakeful night  
In Araby, romances; legends penned  
For solace by dim light of monkish lamps;  
Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised  
By youthful squires; adventures endless, spun  
By the dismantled warrior in old age,  
Out of the bowels of those very schemes  
In which his youth did first extravagate;  
These spread like day, and something in the shape

Of these will live till man shall be no more.  
 Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are ours.  
 And *they must* have their food. Our childhood sits,  
 Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne  
 That hath more power than all the elements.'

William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Bk. V.

Verse is the embodiment of poetic rhythm, and the turn or transition from one line to another is in accordance with the rhythmical articulation. I imagine that this coincidence of verse with rhythm is never broken without a set purpose, as when Spenser would produce the effect of levity and mock-admiration (411).

652. Subject to the established conditions of versification, each poet plays upon the rhythm of his native tongue, and strives to produce a sound in harmony with his thought. This is plainly perceived in the following lines from the opening of Dryden's *Æneid* :—

'From hence the line of Alban fathers come,  
 And the long glories of majestic Rome.'

In Milton's description of the cock, the rhythm is imitative :

'While the Cock with lively din  
 Scatters the rear of darkness thin;  
 And to the stack, or the Barn-dore  
 Stoutly struts his Dames before,'— *L'Allegro*.

All true poetry feels after, and grows towards, a responsive musical accompaniment, which sounds to the ear of the mind *like* the thing described, even though it should be the process of nature, which marches in silence. The following lines, from an unknown poet, who signs G. M., display this harmony of the rhythm with the description :—

'On that opposing hill, as on the stage  
 Of rural theatre, or Virgil's page,  
 I watch the shifting scenes of country life,—  
 Man's patient labour and his world-old strife.  
 First, the stout team drags on the biting plough;  
 Thro' the hard clods it cuts and pierces slow;  
 The careful yeoman guides the furrow'd way,  
 The rook succeeds, and lives another day.

Then come the sowers, who with careless skill  
 Scatter the grain and every fissure fill;  
 Then the light harrow the smooth soil restores,  
 And soon the field feels life in all her pores.  
 Next some bright morning, as I mark the scene,  
 My fancy soothes me with a shade of green,  
 Which after every shower more vivid grows,  
 Till em'rald brightly o'er the surface glows,  
 Then yellow clothes the scene, and soon, too soon,  
 Red ears bow heavy to the harvest moon.'

653. In making a poetical translation, the first thing is to get hold of a melody. The metre, and even in some measure the grammar, must be secondary; else there can be no rhythm, and therefore no unity. Your verses may parse, and they may scan, and be but doggerel after all. The master-principle, then, is rhythm. In the following lines from Mr. Griffith's translation of the *Rāmāyāna*, we have not only words and phrases and metre, but we have also a rhythm, which gives the whole a unity and an individuality, making it 'like something'; and we, who do not read Sanskrit, can enquire whether that is a faithful rendering of the effect of the original:—

'Balmy cool the air was breathing, welcome clouds were floating by,  
 Humming bees with joyful music swelled the glad wild peacock's cry.  
 Their wing-feathers wet with bathing, birds slow flying to the trees  
 Rested in the topmost branches waving to the western breeze.'

But no English reader with a cultivated ear would be likely to ask whether the following bore any resemblance to Horace; simply because, through lack of rhythm, it has no unity, and it leaves on the mind no impression of having any likeness or similitude of its own:—

'Methinks Dame Nature to discriminate  
 What's just from what's unjust entirely fails;  
 Though doubtless fairly she can separate  
 What's good from what is bad, and aye prevails  
 What to avoid, what to desire, to state;  
 And Reason cannot prove that in the scales  
 The man who broke another's cabbage-leaf  
 Should weigh as guilty as the sacrilegious thief.'

654. It would lead us too far if we attempted to exemplify in detail the conclusion at which these latter pages are pointed. It is this:—Our language has passed on beyond the stage at which the chime of words is a care to the national ear, and it has adopted instead thereof the pleasure of a musical rhythm, which pervades the sentence and binds it into one. Ewald has happily described the perception of rhythm as *Sinn für's Ganze*—a feeling or sentiment for the Whole. When the English language is now used so as to display a sonorous aptness in the words, we call it Word-painting.

Modern languages have a continuity of development and a flexibility of action, and growing out of these a power of following the movements of the mind, such as was never attained by the classical languages. If we take Demosthenes and Cicero as the maturest products of the Greek and Latin languages, we feel that they do not attain to the range of the best modern writers, or even to that of the fine passages in the prose writings of Milton. Great elasticity, great plasticity, has been added to language by the development of symbolism; great acquisitions have been made both in the compass and in the rhythm of language. This of course displays itself chiefly in the greater oratorical efforts. The capacity of a language is seen best in the masterly periods of great orators. In our day we have heard much praise of short sentences; and that praise for the most part has been well bestowed. The vast majority of writers are engaged in the diffusion of knowledge, in popularising history or science; or else they write with the avowed purpose of entertaining. Wherever the object is to make knowledge easy, or to make reading easy, the short sentence is to be commended. But when the mind of an original thinker burns with the conception of new thoughts, or the mind of the orator is aflame with the enthusiasm of

new combinations and newly perceived conclusions, it is natural for them to overflow in long and elaborately subordinated sentences, which tax the powers of the hearer or reader to keep up with them. These are among the greatest efforts of mind, and their best expression naturally constitutes the grandest exhibition of the power of human speech; and this power has received great accessions by the modern development of symbolism and its companion rhythm (443).

**655.** Short sentences are prevalent in our language, as long ones are in the German. In all things we incline to curtness and stuntness. Not that this gives the full account of the matter. German literature has been far more engaged in the acquisition, while English literature has been employed more in the diffusion, of knowledge. This is probably the chief cause of our short and easy sentences. But we can use the cumulate construction when needed, and there are places in which force would be lost by dividing it into two or three successive and seriatim sentences. The following affords a fair example of a cumulative subject. It is all 'subject' down to the words printed in capitals.

'The houses of the grandmothers and great-grandmothers of this generation, at least the country houses, with front-door and back-door always standing open, winter and summer, and a thorough draught always blowing through; with all the scrubbing and cleaning and polishing and scouring which used to go on; the grandmothers and still more the great-grandmothers always out of doors and never with a bonnet on except to go to church; these things, when contrasted with our present "civilized" habits, ENTIRELY ACCOUNT for the fact so often seen of a great-grandmother who was a tower of physical vigour, descending into a grandmother perhaps a little less vigorous but still sound as a bell and healthy to the core, into a mother languid and confined to her carriage and house, and lastly into a daughter sickly and confined to her bed.'—*Florence Nightingale, Notes on Nursing.*

**656.** He who hopes that his writings may be an agreeable accompaniment to tea and bread-and-butter, may well adopt as his literary type the conversational sentences of

Addison, the father of popular English literature, and the founder of easy writing for recreative study:—

‘It is with much satisfaction that I hear this great city enquiring day by day after these my papers, and receiving my morning lectures with a becoming seriousness and attention. My publisher tells me that there are already 3000 of them distributed every day; so that if I allow twenty readers to every paper, which I look upon as a modest computation, I may reckon about three score thousand disciples in London and Westminster, who I hope will take care to distinguish themselves from the thoughtless herd of their ignorant and inattentive brethren. Since I have raised to myself so great an audience I shall spare no pains to make their instruction agreeable and their diversion useful. For which reasons I shall endeavour to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality, that my readers may, if possible, both ways find their account in the speculation of the day. And to the end that their virtue and discretion may not be short, transient, intermittent starts of thought, I have resolved to refresh their memories from day to day, till I have recovered them out of their desperate state of vice and folly into which the age is fallen. The mind that lies fallow for a single day sprouts up in follies that are only to be killed by a constant and assiduous culture. It was said of Socrates that he brought philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea tables and in coffee houses.

I would, therefore, in a very particular manner, recommend these my speculations to all well-regulated families, that set apart an hour in every morning for tea and bread-and-butter; and would earnestly advise them for their good to order this paper to be punctually served up, and to be looked upon as a part of the tea equipage.’—*Spectator*, No. 10.

But he who wishes for periods that will furnish a mental gymnastic, must read page after page of Milton’s prose works, or of Jeremy Taylor, where, amidst much that is almost chaotic in its irregular massiveness, he may from time to time fall in with such a piece of architecture as will reward his patient quest. If the following piece from the close of Milton’s *Reformation in England* appears to the reader hardly to match this description, it will at least serve to give a taste of what a really great sentence can be.

‘Then, amidst the *Hymns*, and *Halleluiahs* of *Saints* some one may perhaps bee heard offering at high *strains* in new and lofty *Measures* to sing and celebrate thy *divine Mercies*, and *marvelous Judgements* in this Land throughout all *Ages*; whereby this great and Warlike Nation instructed and

inur'd to the fervent and continuall practice of *Truth* and *Righteousnesse*, and casting farre from her the *rags* of her old *vices*, may presse on hard to that *high* and *bappy* emulation to be found the *soberest*, wisest, and *most Christian People* at that day when thou the Eternall and shortly-expected King shalt open the Clouds to judge the severall Kingdomes of the World, and distributing *Nationall Honours* and *Rewards* to Religious and just *Common-wealths*, shalt put an end to all Earthly *Tyrannies*, proclaiming thy universal and milde Monarchy through Heaven and Earth. Where they undoubtedly that by their *Labours*, *Counsels*, and *Prayers*, have been earnest for the *Common good* of *Religion* and their Countrey, shall receive, above the inferiour *Orders* of the *Blessed*, the *Regall* addition of *Principalities*, *Legions*, and *Thrones* into their glorious Titles, and in supereminence of *beatifick Vision*, progressing the *datelesse* and *irrevoluble* Circle of *Eternity* shall clasp inseparable Hands with *joy*, and blisse in over-measure for ever.' [4to edit. Lond. 1641, p. 89.]

§57. It is a gain to our general literature that the long sentence is but rarely used, for it is sorely out of place in ordinary writing, such as historical narrative, or any other kind that is produced at a moderate temperature. It is the defect of Clarendon's style that his sentences are too long for their energy. Long sentences are intolerable without enthusiasm. It is only under the glow of passion that the highest capabilities of a language are displayed. But the resources of modern syntax for continuous and protracted structure are so strong that to the beauty of the long sentence it is not necessary that the passion be at all furious, but only that the feeling be strong enough to sustain itself during the flight from one resting-place to another. The following four stanzas from *In Memoriam* constitute but one period, which though quiet enough is yet well sustained:—

## LXXXV.

'I past beside the reverend walls  
     In which of old I wore the gown;  
     I roved at random through the town,  
 And saw the tumult of the halls;  
  
 And heard once more in college fanes  
     The storm their high-built organs make,  
     And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
 The prophets blazon'd on the panes;

And caught once more the distant shout,  
 The measured pulse of racing oars  
 Among the willows; paced the shores  
 And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt  
 The same, but not the same; and last  
 Up that long walk of limes I past  
 To see the rooms in which he dwelt.'

If we ask, What is this sustaining power, which bears along more than a hundred words in one movement, with all the unity of an individual organism? the answer is, that it is Rhythm.

658. If we want to see lengthiness of language carried out to an extreme and exaggerated development, unsupported moreover and unbalanced by rhythm, we have only to read a legal document, such as a marriage settlement, or a release of trust. Often whole lines are mere strings of words, till the reader's head swims with the fluctuations of the unstable element, and, like a man at sea, or in a balloon, he longs to plant his feet on *terra firma*.

'And also of from and against all and all manner of actions and suits cause and causes of action and suit reckonings debts duties claims and demands whatsoever both at Law and in Equity which they the said releasing and covenanting parties or any or either of them their or any or either of their heirs executors administrators or assigns or any other person or persons whomsoever (*sic*) claiming or who shall or may at any time hereafter claim by from through under or in trust for them him or her or any or either of them may or can have claim challenge or demand of from or against the said'—

And so it goes floating on, when it could almost all be said by a mere passive verb; as, 'The trust is discharged.'

659. We cannot define Rhythm, we can only say what it does. It combines and braces language into a whole; it gives compactness, unity, beauty. It does more; it gives a harmony of speech with things or thoughts. As feeling is kindled, language, spoken or written, is apt to chime in with the



character of the thing described. Observe the closing words of this quotation, which is taken from a report of the Thanksgiving Day :—

'As from time to time during the service the assemblage stood up—the movement travelling over the level of the dome area and rising as in waves round the great piers—one gained some idea of the vast numbers. But it was when they sat down that they most impressed one; for then, indeed, they had all the multitudinous aspect of a subsiding sea.'—*The Times*, Feb. 28, 1872.

We have now gone to the limits and beyond the limits of analysis. If Rhythm is irreducible, much more is eloquence, or whatever we shall call that which is the life of literature. Literature in its happiest moods has united more of the properties of the everlasting harmonies than any other product of the human mind. Beyond all analysis of language, beyond all historic and philologic interest, there is something in eloquence for which we have no definite name, but which, when it is present in literature, imparts to writings a perennial durability ensuring their preservation and making men call them immortal.

'Or wherein again resides the force of human eloquence in things human? Wherein lies that wondrous power, which not only convinces the understanding, not only creates a passing emotion, or dazzles the imagination, but sways the human will, even when it has determined beforehand not to be swayed? It is not clearness of reasoning. Truth itself will convince: it will not win. Man's free agency will look on unmoved. Still less is it rich imagery, or power of thought, or loftiness of conception, or beauty of diction, or measured rhythm, or any skill which human art can analyse. These things have their delight, but they will not move. The ear drinks in the cadence: the imagination admires: but the soul looks on unwarmed, unreached, as at the cold unpiercing brilliancy of the summer lightning. Only when the soul goes out of itself and speaks to the soul, can man sway the will of man. Eloquence then is all soul, embodied, it may be, in burning forceful words, but with a power above the power of words, an electric force which pierces the soul addressed, transfuses into it another's thoughts, makes it its own, by giving forth out of itself. Analyse eloquence! Analyse the whirlwind or the lightning! Yes! these you may analyse, for they are material: eloquence you can no more analyse than the soul itself, whose voice it is in the simplicity of its immateriality.'—E. B. Pusey, *University Sermons*, 1859-1872; Sermon I.

*Conclusion—Concerning the Origin of Language.*

660. There is an opinion that the origin of language may be traced, that we may form a science of what has been called Generative Philology, and that important data for such a science might be drawn from the inceptive stages of speech.

The first dawn of intelligence, the first smile of the infant on the mother, is in response to the tones of her maternal encouragements:—

‘Incipe parve puer risu cognoscere matrem.’

Vergil, *Eclogue* iv. 60.

‘Smile then, dear child, and make thy mother glad.’

Translation by H. D. Skrine, 1868.

Before speech is attained by the infant, he gets a set of notes or tones to express pleasure or offence, assent or refusal. The first attempts to speak are mere chirrupings and warblings; that is to say, it is the music of what is said that is caught at first, while the child has as yet no ears for the harder sense. By a beautiful and true touch of nature, and all the more noticeable because it is not a commonplace of poetry, a poet of our own day has coupled the early speech of children with the singing of birds:—

‘I love the song of birds,  
And the children’s early words.’

Charles Mackay, *A Plain Man’s Philosophy*.

John Keble has justified the teaching of divine truths to children, on the ground that, if the sense is beyond them, there is a certain musical path of communication:—

'Oh! say not, dream not, heavenly notes  
 To childish ears are vain,  
 That the young mind at random floats,  
 And cannot reach the strain:

Dim or unheard the words may fall,  
 And yet the heaven-taught mind  
 May learn the sacred air, and all  
 The harmony unwind.'

So Mr. Edward Denison, speaking of his East-end lectures to the dockyard labourers:—

'I indulge them largely with quotations from Wordsworth, Tennyson, and even Pope, much of which it is of course impossible they can understand, but which they delight to hear. I suppose the rhythm and cadence tickles their ear, and somehow helps to lift their fancy to a higher level.'—*Letters, &c.* (Bentley and Son). 1872.

660 a. The general effect of such observations is towards this:—That the sentient and emotional parts of human nature have a greater share in the origins of language than the intellectual faculty. The first awakener of language is Love.

And the first developer is Sound. This seems to be testified by the whole body of nursery-rhyme literature. Nor do we entirely lose in manhood the power of enjoying a fine sonorous composition apart from its sense. The nursery-rhyme passion has its mature forms.

'But what do you think of Coleridge? To me, when I cannot follow him, there is always a fine ring, like bell-chimes, in his melody; not unlike our best nursery rhymes, for it is curious the fine cadences we get in the nursery. I like Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* for its exquisite cadence. That whole passage beginning—

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
 A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
 Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
 Through caverns measureless to man,  
 Down to a sunless sea"—

has a most fascinating melody. I don't know what it means, but it's very fine."—John Duncan, *Colloquia Peripatetica*, p. 53.

I knew a little orator, who, at the age of five years, would make speeches of irresistible force, though he was more than usually backward in grammatical sequence. It being one morning said in his presence that he had been found half out of bed, and the cause surmised that his brother had elbowed him out, he exclaimed, 'Yes, he elbowed me harder and harder—*could be!*' In modulation this was a perfect utterance: the voice had risen very gradually and plaintively so far as 'harder and harder'—then a pause, as he was feeling after a climax—and then out broke in an octave higher the decisive words '*could be!*'

It was the same boy who once said it was not his bed time 'this 'reckly,' a compromise between 'this minute' and 'directly,' but which, in the way it was delivered, very far surpassed either of these forms of expression.

660 b. The fact is that children have a greater appreciation of sound than of sense, and that accordingly their early words are in good melody and bad grammar. Their judgment of the fitness of words for the office they fill, will often be very distinctly pronounced. And this judgment rests, as indeed it can rest, on nothing else than the chime of the sound with their notion of the thing indicated. The judgment of children is often found so firm and distinct on this matter, that we must conclude a great part of the early exercise of their wakening minds has been concerned with the discrimination of sounds. A little watching might supply many illustrations on this head; what is here produced is not the result of any careful selection, but just what offered itself about the time this chapter was in preparation.

A father who took an interest in some pigeons that were kept for the amusement of his children, had the whim to call them all by some fanciful name; and as they multiplied it became harder to invent acceptable names. So it hap-

pened that, after many familiar names, there came in some from classical sources. Of these it was observed (months after) that one had fixed itself in the memory of the children. They were chasing the kitten, and their inward glee was venting itself in the name of *Andromache*, which they used as a term of endearment. Some days later, when they were again at play, and shouting '*Andromache*,' their father asked them, 'Which is *Andromache*?' The younger answered with an exuberance of satisfaction: '*Johnnie*'s calling me *Andromache*!' Their father replied, 'If *Johnnie* calls you *Andromache*, I'd call him *Polyhymnia*!' At this, *Johnnie* (a boy of six years old) towered up like a pillar of moral conviction, and in a tone of mingled disdain and deprecation, said: 'Augh! Nobody COULDN'T be called *THAT*, I'm sure!' ●

660 c. In the minds of children and savages the word and the thing are absolutely identified. If they are able to grasp the name, they seem to have a satisfaction analogous to that which the mature mind tastes in description or analysis.

I was staying at the house of a friend, where the youngest child was a brave, bold, golden-locked boy, under three years old. As I was dressing in the morning he came into my room, and we had a long and varied conversation. One of the topics was broached and disposed of somewhat in the following manner:—'Are *Mabel* and *Trixy* coming to-day?' he asked. 'I'm sure I don't know. Who *are* *Mabel* and *Trixy*?' Thereat he took up a strong and confident attitude, and with a tone which at once justified himself and refuted me, he said: 'They *ARE* *Mabel* and *Trixy*; that's their *NAMES*!'—the last clause a perfect bar of remonstrative music; as much as to say, 'You surely are satisfied with *that*!'

A boy of five years old was asked, 'Do you know where

your cousin Johnnie is at school?' 'No! I don't know; where is he?' 'At Honiton.' 'At Hon-t-iton? Isn't that a funny place? I call it!'

Here it will be observed the place is judged of by the sound of its name; there is no distinction between the name and the thing.

The following most significant record of native talk in the Aru Islands is from *The Malay Archipelago*, by Alfred Russell Wallace (1869)<sup>1</sup>:—

'Two or three of them got round me, and begged me for the twentieth time to tell them the name of my country. Then, as they could not pronounce it satisfactorily, they insisted that I was deceiving them, and that it was a name of my own invention. One funny old man, who bore a ludicrous resemblance to a friend of mine at home, was almost indignant. "Unglung!" said he, "who ever heard of such a name?—anglang, angerlang—that can't be the name of your country; you are playing with us." Then he tried to give a convincing illustration. "My country is Wanumbai—anybody can say Wanumbai. I'm an orang-Wanumbai; but N-glung! who ever heard of such a name? Do tell us the real name of your country, and when you are gone we shall know how to talk about you." To this luminous argument and remonstrance I could oppose nothing but assertion, and the whole party remained firmly convinced that I was for some reason or other deceiving them.'—ch. xxxi.

All these are instances of the inability of man, in the earlier stages of his career, to assume the mastery over language. His mind is enthralled by it, and is led away after all its suggestions. We are told by Professor Jowett that the Greek philosopher, 'the contemporary of Plato and Socrates, was incapable of resisting the power of any analogy which occurred to him . . . and he was helpless against the influence of any word which had an equivocal "or double sense".'

<sup>1</sup> Indicated to me by my friend Prebendary Buckle; through whom also I have authority from Mr. Wallace to add that it is a carefully faithful record. He says it 'was written down on the spot the day after it occurred, and is strictly accurate as far as I could reproduce the words and tone of it in English.'

<sup>2</sup> *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. ii. p. 505.

It may be imagined that we, in our advanced condition of modern civilisation, are now completely masters over our language, but an investigation of the subject might produce an unexpected verdict. Philology is one of the most instrumental of studies for investing man with the full prerogative over his speech, for its highest office is to enable him to comprehend the relation of his words to the action of his mind, and thus to render the mind superior to verbal illusions.

660 d. Those who think that the sounds of nature first suggested language to man, hold a theory of language which may be compared to that theory of music by which music is derived from the cataract in the mountains, the wind in the trees, or the sound of the ocean on the shore. It appears to me that there is nothing in inward or outward experience to justify such a theory. As there are sounds in nature that may give an occasional suggestion to the musician, but none that can be acknowledged either as his model to work by or as the original source of his art, so it is with speech. Music and language alike must have come from within, from the greatest depths of our nature.

Man's conscious work upon language in fitting it to express his mind, is the least part of the matter. The greater part is worked out unconsciously. And long eras pass after the perfecting of its processes, before intellectual man awakes to perceive what he himself has done. This only proves from what a depth within his own nature this power of speech is evolved; only proves what a mystery man is to himself: and it casts a doubt over the prospect of our ever tracing a scientific path up to those springs which fancy calls the Origin of Language.

For me the poet speaks most appropriately on this

theme, because he speaks most vaguely, most wonderingly, and most inquiringly:—

‘Ye wandering Utterances, has earth no scheme,  
No scale of moral music, to unite  
Powers that survive but in the faintest dream  
Of memory?—O that ye might stoop to bear  
Chains, such precious chains of sight  
As laboured minstrelsies through ages wear!  
O for a balance fit the truth to tell  
Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well!’

To make a path from the visible, ponderable, and corporeal, up to that which is invisible, imponderable, and spiritual, with no other building-material than vocal sound to erect a bridge from matter to mind,—tempering it in the finest filtered harmonies that can be appreciated by the sentient, emotional, and intellectual nature of man;—this seems to be the task and function of human speech.

Of its origin we can only say, it is of the same root with that poetic faculty whereby man makes nature echo his sentiments; it is correlated to the invention of music, whereby dead things are made to discourse, of human emotions; it is a peculiar property of that nature whose other chief and proper attributes are the power of Love, and the capacity for the knowledge of God.



# I.

## INDEX OF LETTERS AND WORDS.

[Words belonging to the English vocabulary are printed in the ordinary Roman type: Provincialisms in *Italics*: those in the **Thick** type are either Scottish or of the Transition period, or highly antiquated: Saxon forms are in **SMALL CAPITALS**.]

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